

...saves boy from rise
(R) - A boy survived a fall from a building...
...red's flock skin's loss
INSKY GORILL - Hundreds of gorillas...
...Journalist slain in Algeria
ALGIERS (AP) - A journalist working for the pro-government daily Al Moudjahid was shot to death Tuesday morning in central Algiers, security forces said. The journalist, whose name was not disclosed, was killed while reporting on the situation in the city. The journalist was identified as Ferhat el Zohar. Information on the circumstances of the slaying was not immediately available. Journalists and foreigners have been targets of extremists trying to topple the military-backed government.

Palestinians protest house demolitions

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Hundreds of Palestinians gathered Tuesday to protest plans to demolish homes, saying Israeli promises of equal treatment of all city residents were worthless. "It is very clear that Ehud Olmert (the mayor), and the government of Israel are planning to kick us out of this city," said Jbara Salameh, a Palestinian resident of the Ras Al Amoud neighbourhood. He stood with other demonstrators outside Orient House in East Jerusalem, itself a target of Israeli anger as the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) headquarters, in protest and attempt to demolish his 1987 house. Mr. Salameh said he was shocked when he read in the newspaper that his home will be demolished because it lacks a licence because one was issued retroactively. Last week the municipality said it planned to demolish Arab homes in East Jerusalem built illegally. A Palestinian human rights group says that about 50 Arab homes are torn down in Jerusalem annually. They said 50,000 Palestinians have been forced to move outside the municipal boundaries because they could not get adequate housing.

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Majali to reshuffle Cabinet today

10 MPs expected to join government, with anticipated change in around 15 portfolios

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali is today expected to introduce a major government reshuffle that will lead to the inclusion of up to 10 deputies in the Cabinet and bring in Senator Thouqan Al Hindawi as deputy prime minister, informed sources said.

The sources said that Dr. Majali has not yet decided on the final composition of his new government, but confirmed that the reshuffle would include up to 15 portfolios. They said that the decision to include members of the Lower House in the Cabinet was made in the late hours of Tuesday despite an earlier decision to exclude them.

Parliamentary sources said that the major blocs at the House will be represented in the new Cabinet but the Islamic Action Front (IAF) will remain in the opposition. They said the centrist Democratic Progressive Coalition (DPC) will be represented in the Cabinet by four members, the National Action Front (NAF) headed by Abdul Hadi Al Majali two, and the Jordan National Alliance (JNA) will be represented by its President Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh. The Independent Islamic Bloc (IIB) was expected to be represented by Deputy Awad Khleifat.

According to the sources, the following deputies agreed to enter the government by late Tuesday: Abdul Raouf Al Rawabdeh

(JNA) as minister of state for parliamentary affairs. Aref Bataineh (DPC), minister of health. Samir Kassar (DPC), water. Saleh Tshreidat (DPC), youth.

Mansour Ben Tarif, education. Awad Khleifat (IIB), education.

Rateb Al Saoud (NAF), social development. NAF members Abdul Majid Al Azzam and Abdul Baqi Jammo were also expected to join the Cabinet but it was not clear which portfolios will be assigned to them.

The sources said that legal advisor at the Prime Ministry, Hisham Al Tel, was expected to become minister of justice, and Mohammad Thneibat, head of the public administration

institute, was said to head a new cabinet portfolio, the Civil Service Ministry. Head of the Audit Bureau Adel Al Qudah, Housing Bank Chairman Zubair Khouri and university professor Moheddine Touq were also expected to be in Dr. Majali's new team. Deputy Abdul Karim Al Kabariti was reportedly offered the key portfolio of foreign minister but had not given his answer by the time the Jordan Times went to print.

The sources said, however, that the deputies joining the government were told they were chosen as individuals and not in their capacity as representatives of parliamentary blocs.

The ministers who expected to leave the Cabinet were:

Hindawi to become deputy premier

Deputy Prime Minister Saeed Al Tel; Deputy Prime Minister Ma'n Abu Nowar; Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan; Minister of Water Hisham Al Khatib; Minister of State Ahmad Al Aqaileh; Minister of Culture Mahmoud Ameen; Minister of Agriculture Mahdi Al Farhan; Minister of Social Development Mohammad Al Sqour; Minister of Supply Radhi Ibrahim; Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas; Minister of Telecommunications Tareq Suheimat;

Minister of Transport Adeb Halaseh; Minister of Public Works Abdul Razzaq Ensour; Minister of Planning Ziad Fariz; According to informed sources, political advisor to His Majesty King Hussein Marwan Al Oqsem has refused to join the government as deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs. Other sources, however, said that by late Wednesday, Mr. Oqsem had kept the door open for joining the government. The reshuffle will be the second in Dr. Majali's government since it first took office in



Thouqan Hindawi

(Continued on page 5)

Journalist slain in Algeria

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Jordan, Israel to form border demarcation panel

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Jordan and Israel agreed here Tuesday to set up a commission to resolve their border dispute, and agreed in principle to construct a road linking Israel, Jordan and Egypt.

The agreement came after two days of talks here which U.S. special Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross described as "a very productive and very useful meeting." The trilateral talks also agreed common agendas for talks in a number of areas ranging from border security to water and the environment. Mr. Ross told a press conference. Talks on the various issues will begin in the Middle East region next month. The accomplishment of this session has surpassed expectations, the head of the Jordanian delegation, ambassador to Washington Fayez Tarawneh said. After two days of talks, the parties issued a joint statement summarising a long list of procedural and practical agreements designed to deepen their economic and cultural cooperation once they have achieved full peace. Among the conclusions of the talks listed in the joint statement were the following: — An agreement to set up a commission on boundaries,

water, energy and the environment to negotiate some of the most difficult issues between the two countries.

— A decision to begin work of a draft to outline future trade and economic relations.

— A decision to invite Palestinians to discuss cooperation in trade, finance and banking.

— The United States will merge Jordanian and Israeli papers on comprehensive development of the Jordan Valley into an umbrella master plan.

— They agreed to convene a special sub-committee on tourism.

— They agreed to designate one official from each side to coordinate on a "transboundary cultural heritage park" in the valley.

Dr. Tarawneh stressed that the Israeli-Jordan bilateral aspect of the peace talks had "lagged behind in the past four to five months" since the two sides agreed a common agenda for talks in September, noting that no discussions had since

been held under the various headings.

But he stressed that there was a very long way to go before a peace treaty can be drawn up.

Asked if the progress in Israeli-Jordanian talks meant that bilateral talks between the various parties to the Middle East peace talks could now resume, Mr. Ross said no decision had yet been made.

But Tuesday's agreement was "a positive step on a path-way that is moving us in a direction in which we all want to go."

He refused to comment on whether Secretary of State Warren Christopher would go on to the Middle East after attending a meeting in Istanbul at the end of the week.

Mr. Christopher said in a U.S. television interview Tuesday that he hoped to visit the Middle East soon. The State Department said Monday that a Middle East trip after Istanbul had not been ruled out.

In Amman earlier Tuesday Information Minister Jawad Al Anani described as positive a recent statement by Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres on demarcation of borders with Jordan.

Dr. Anani said the changing water levels at the Dead Sea

Nabulsi: Economy performing well, some measures needed, growth at 6%

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordanian economy performed well in the first five months of 1994 and could be expected to register a growth between five and six per cent during the year, Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Mohammad Nabulsi said Tuesday.

Briefing the local media in an informal meeting at the CBJ, the governor also said the Kingdom had to adopt more rationalisation and belt-tightening measures with a view to gaining optimum benefit from the utilisation of resources.

Dr. Nabulsi cited as examples the amount the government spends on higher education with little direct returns and the indirect subsidies offered to consumers in the water and energy sector and said revenue collection should

also be improved. Exports improved by 20 per cent and imports showed a 15 per cent decline in the first quarter of this year when compared with the corresponding period in 1993, but the trend could change during the rest of the year, Dr. Nabulsi said. He expected inflation to remain under five per cent.

Some sectors of the economy did show stagnation, but other sectors performed better than expected to make up for the shortfall and project an overall growth, he said. The nature of investments in the "right direction" and expatriate remittances have also improved, the CBJ governor said.

Jordan hopes to open debt rescheduling talks with the Paris Club of creditor governments later this month on repayments maturing until the date of an agreement, he said, adding that the amount co-



Mohammad Nabulsi

vered would be in the region of \$420 million including principle and interest. The Kingdom would also be seeking to reschedule dues to

the Paris Club maturing in another 18 months — until the end of 1995.

He estimated that the Kingdom would have to pay around \$400 million for streamlining the expected agreement with Paris Club.

Jordan has scored impressive success by implementing the economic restructuring and recovery programme agreed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), but there are shortcomings in adopting corrective measures in the water and energy sector, Dr. Nabulsi said, noting that the water and electricity tariffs did not actually reflect the cost of production and distribution.

Jordan is expected to receive \$180 million in assistance from the IMF and World Bank in three years to help its balance of payments, and the Kingdom has already received the first

(Continued on page 5)

Romania signs accord with PLO

BUCHAREST (R) — Romania signed a cooperation agreement with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on Tuesday, pledging support to rebuild economic infrastructure in the Gaza Strip and Jericho. "This accord sets a framework for bilateral cooperation for the purpose of establishing peace and stability," Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the PLO's political department, told reporters. He made the remarks after signing the framework cooperation agreement with Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu. Mr. Kaddoumi started a visit to this ex-communist Balkan state on Tuesday, at the head of a senior PLO delegation. Earlier in the day he had talks with Romanian President Ion Iliescu.

Yemeni truce shattered, north closes in on Aden

Combined agency dispatches

NORTHERN YEMENI troops edged closer to the southern bastion of Aden and shelled its airport on Tuesday as U.N. chief Boutros Ghali urged a new ceasefire after a truce which lasted just six hours. The government of President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his southern rival Ali Salem Al Beidh blamed each other for the collapse of the ceasefire, ahead of a peace bid by U.N. special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi.

At least four people were killed and 75 wounded as northern artillery units shelled Aden airport and the surrounding area for the third straight day, hospital officials said.

Northern forces also captured the village of Sabr 20 kilometres north of Aden in a push which took them several kilometres closer to the city. The travellers said the situation was "very tense" in Makadara, 30 kilometres north of Aden after one of Mr. Rabbani's key commanders changed sides and established secret links with the Hezbe-Islami faction of Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. They said the highway linking Kabul with the nearby river port of Hairatan was cut early Tuesday and drivers were avoiding Shakardara.

paration for the dawn advance. There were heavy artillery exchanges as southern forces tried to halt the tank offensive.

The ceasefire was announced unilaterally by Mr. Saleh's government late Monday under growing international pressure following last week's U.N. Security Council resolution demanding a halt to the fighting.

The ceasefire in the war raging since May 5 took effect at midnight Monday but shelling resumed six hours later and the thunder of artillery fire echoed around Aden, capital of the self-declared Yemen Democratic Republic.

In Geneva, Dr. Ghali called on the two parties to respect a new ceasefire and expressed concern at the worsening situation in Aden.

The north and south should "return immediately to negotiations which would permit a peaceful resolution of their differences and the restoration of peace and stability," he said. His special envoy, former Algerian Minister Brahimi, left Geneva and stopped over in Cairo en route to Sanaa, where he was expected to open talks on Wednesday.

Dr. Ghali called on the U.N.'s humanitarian affairs department to send emergency aid to Aden, which has a population of 500,000 people. War-weary residents of the

port city expressed dismay at the short-lived ceasefire. Hundreds of people returned to queuing in front of wells, petrol stations and bakeries.

"It's a war against civilians," said Abdullah Maysur, a 46-year-old mechanic who was queuing at a well. "Look how we're suffering," Abul Kader Aarrak, 56, shouted at reporters.

Aden was left without drinking water three days ago after northern troops shelled a pumping station at Bir Nasser, 15 kilometres from the city.

Six storage tanks at the south's only oil refinery at little Aden just outside the city continued to burn Tuesday, two days after northern air raids.

On the political battlefield, the government in Sanaa said it was still ready to implement a ceasefire if southern forces stopped attacking northern troops.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Bassandawa told reporters: "We will abide by ceasefire the moment the mutineers stop firing at our forces."

The southern air force and navy attacked northern positions around Aden, and southern warplanes also attacked oil installations in Marib, north-eastern Yemen, and a town on the Saudi border, he said. In Cairo, Haider Abu Bakr

Israel, Syria close to resume bilaterals

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel and Syria will resume direct peace talks soon, and the United States will play a central role, an Israeli cabinet minister said Tuesday.

The last round of talks between the two sides was held in January, the 12th in the series that began in 1991. But attempts to resume were frozen after the Feb. 25 Hezbollah mosque massacre in a Jewish settler massacred more than 30 Palestinian worshippers.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has twice travelled to the region since then in an effort to mediate the differences.

Syria wants Israel to declare its readiness to pull out of the entire Golan Heights, Israel wants guarantees of a full peace before talking about withdrawal.

"The negotiations with Syria are about to resume," Environment Minister Yossi Sarid told Israel Radio. "I can only hope that this round, in which the U.S. secretary of state will participate, will be more positive and promising."

"We want to achieve peace with Syria that is peace in every sense and not an optical illusion, with full diplomatic and commercial relations," Mr. Sarid said during a tour of the strategic Golan Heights.

Mr. Christopher may visit the Middle East at the end of his current European tour, a State Department official indicated Monday.

"Consultations are continuing and I can't rule it out at this point that it might come at the end of this trip," spokeswoman Christine Shelly told reporters in answer to a question about Mr. Christopher's

Middle East travel plans.

But she stressed that no plans had yet been made, and that Mr. Christopher's return to the Middle East "also might come sometime after that."

Mr. Christopher "will return to the Middle East when he thinks it is meaningful to do so," Ms. Shelly said. "It is certainly his general expectation to return in the not too distant future" to the region. Mr. Christopher is currently accompanying President Bill Clinton on a trip to Europe to mark the 50th anniversary of D-Day.

Mr. Christopher's visit to the region last month failed to melt the deep freeze, although Israel Television and newspapers reported he got Israel to commit to a full withdrawal from the entire Golan for the first time.

But the Syrians reportedly resisted Israel's demand that withdrawal take place over 10 years. Mr. Sarid hinted that the offer of the whole Golan, over a number of years, still stood.

"If it is a long-term arrangement in stages, where we can always test the reliability of the agreement... Israel will have to pay a very, very heavy and very, very painful price," he said.

He said that the government would take any peace deal to a referendum or to general elections before implementation. He was sure the government would win any vote on the peace.

"It's not just a case of peace with Syria — important in itself — this is the overall peace we have been discussing for so many years..." he said. "If we sign with Syria, we will sign with all the Arab countries."

Fighting erupts in Afghan provinces

KABUL (AFP) — Heavy fighting has erupted in west and east Afghanistan between forces loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani and a rival alliance trying to topple his regime, according to travellers arriving here Tuesday. The travellers said the situation was "very tense" in Makadara, 30 kilometres north of Kabul after one of Mr. Rabbani's key commanders changed sides and established secret links with the Hezbe-Islami faction of Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. They said the highway linking Kabul with the nearby river port of Hairatan was cut early Tuesday and drivers were avoiding Shakardara.

Four districts upgraded as governorates

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet on Tuesday decided to upgrade four districts to governorates, thus bringing to 12 the number of governorates in Jordan.

At a Cabinet session chaired by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, the Cabinet decided to upgrade Jerash, Madaba, Ajloun and Aqaba to governorates. However, the government's decision needs to be endorsed by a Royal Decree in order to become effective.

Commenting on the Cabinet decision, Information Minister Jawad Al Anani said the decision reflects the government's intentions to restructure and organize local administration.

Dr. Anani said the decision is a first step to be followed by other moves which might include the possible cancellation of sub-districts and upgrading some of them to districts.

The other governorates are those of Amman, Zarqa,

Maan, Irbid, Balqa, Tafleh, Karak and Mafrqa.

The four new governorates would be considered as independent administrative units including districts of their own. Earlier they were districts within other governorates.

The upgrading requires the appointment of governors by the Ministry of Interior which is responsible for administrative units.

Dr. Anani said the Cabinet also decided to grant a 100 per cent exemption from tax of profits gained from exports.

The exemption rate was 70 per cent prior to the Cabinet's decision Tuesday.

The minister said the decision was aimed at encouraging exports to help correct the balance of trade, provide job opportunities and attract hard currency and encourage exporters to tap new markets.

according to initial estimates prepared by the Finance Ministry, Dr. Anani said.

However, he added, the government's decision to sacrifice this amount is a justified investment in view of its positive reflections on the national economy.

Dr. Anani noted that exports made under trade protocols signed with other countries are excluded from the Cabinet's decision because importers get certain concessions under such protocols.

Moreover, exports made under such protocols are the fruit of government efforts and not of personal efforts. Also excluded from the exemption are Jordanian exports of phosphates, potash, fertilisers and cement, Dr. Anani said.

Dr. Anani also said the Cabinet decided to form a committee, grouping ministers of tourism and antiquities, and industry and trade to work out

the necessary arrangements for converting the Jordan Express Tourist and Transport (JETT) Company into a normal company providing regular public transport services, in addition to tourist transport.

The current concession agreement expires on June 11, 1994. Under the agreement JETT was providing tourist transport services only.

Dr. Anani said the Cabinet discussed preparations for the forthcoming meetings of the Joint Jordanian-Syrian Higher Committee, which will be held here Saturday under the co-chairmanship of Dr. Majali and his Syrian counterpart Mahmoud Al Zoubi.

Dr. Anani said the meetings have a special importance at this stage, which calls for the coordination of political stands and increasing volume of commercial exchange and enhancing scopes of cooperation.

Palestinian police impose PLO law, jail first Palestinian

By Said Ghazali
The Associated Press

KHAN YUNIS, Gaza Strip — Ibrahim Al Hindi had spent four years in prison for stoning Israeli soldiers. Now he is behind bars again, this time in a Palestinian lockup for assaulting a Palestinian policeman.

The 35-year-old father of six was the first Palestinian to be sentenced by Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) courts in the newly autonomous Gaza Strip.

Mr. Hindi got a six-month sentence in jail for assaulting a police officer. He ripped the shirt off a Palestinian policeman after the officer sprayed him with tear-gas during an argument at a checkpoint.

His brother Nafiz, who was with him at the time also received a six-month sentence under a legal code used by Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction to control its scattered guerrilla forces in Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq, Libya and elsewhere.

"It's unjust," Ibrahim Hindi said in an interview in his jail cell. "They used the Fatah law of 1979, and they shouldn't until we understand it."

In the Gaza Strip, Egypt preserved British mandate laws while it controlled the area from 1948 to 1967. Israel inherited the system, adding its own modifications via military orders.

"We don't accept the occupation amendments to the law. We don't accept the occupation laws here," said Ahmad Mubayyad, senior prosecutor for the southern coastal district. "The PLO is the representative of the Palestinian people, and its law applies to all the Palestinians."

In particular, he said, the PLO was free to impose whatever laws it wished in cases involving PLO police. "We are implementing our Fatah law only on the police and this doesn't need the endorsement of the other side," Mr.

Mubayyad said. Mr. Arafat last month drew Israeli protests when he instructed civil and religious courts in the autonomous zones to start operating according to laws in force prior to June 1967 when Israel seized the West Bank and Gaza.

Israel rejected the unilateral move as a violation of the PLO-Israel agreement saying only the Palestinian authority had legislative powers and any changes in the legal code were subject to Israeli review.

Mr. Mubayyad, who left his home in the West Bank in 1973 and served with the PLO in Yemen, Algeria, Lebanon, Egypt, and Iraq, said the judicial system would be judged on whether it played favourites.

Even if Mr. Hindi was a loyal PLO activist who had suffered under Israeli occupation, "this doesn't mean he should be pardoned if he broke the law," said Mr. Mubayyad. The Hindi brothers were sentenced Friday to six months in prison for assault.

This is a light sentence. We took into consideration that he was a former militant, he resisted the occupiers. He could have been sentenced to three years," said prison director Major Mohammad Tito.

Mr. Tito added that the courts are open to the public, a change from the Israeli military courts which often held closed-door trials, particularly involving serious security cases.

There are 18 prisoners currently being held in the Khan Yunis prison, awaiting trial on charges including car theft, rape, resisting arrest and murder.

The PLO police gave the prisoners the same food they received. On Sunday it was chicken, rice and eggplant, which Ibrahim Hindi shared with the three other prisoners in his cramped cell.

The police barracks and pris-

on were used by Israel as the headquarters of its military government in the city. Some Hebrew signs remain, including one that read "Silence please."

Mr. Mubayyad, reading from a file, said that on Sunday a Palestinian shot six times in the legs and arms gave a statement to police from his hospital bed, saying four masked men tried to abduct him and shot him when he fled.

Masked vigilantes have been responsible for hundreds of killings of fellow Arabs in recent years, most accused of being informants for Israel. In all, 824 Palestinians have been killed by other Palestinians as alleged collaborators since the start of the Palestinian uprising in December 1987.

"Even if he is a collaborator it doesn't mean that the activists can take the law into their own hands. We have only one authority," he said. "It is not their job to punish him, even if he is a collaborator."

Mr. Mubayyad indicated the police were poised to round up weapons from local guerrillas who are not part of the official security apparatus. "Now, we are waiting orders from Arafat to collect weapons," he said.

Over 1,000 Palestinian police live in cramped quarters at the former Israeli army base in this town. Mr. Mubayyad shares his room with five other officers, who share two beds and a broken closet. For the first 18 days in Gaza, the financially strapped Palestinian police survived on donations. But things have started to look up.

On Sunday they received their first pay checks and to their surprise it was \$450, double what they were making in Yemen. Mr. Mubayyad, 40, whose wife and three children are still in Yemen, was clearly delighted. It was his first salary in six months.



An accounts officer (left) from the Palestinian police force pays the salary to a policeman in the police force headquarters on Tuesday. The salary is between \$400-\$450 a policeman and \$1200 per month for a higher ranking officer (AFP photo)

Wife says parole impossible for Pollard

NEW YORK (AP) — Jonathan Pollard, serving a life sentence for spying for Israel, has no real hope of parole despite being eligible next year, his wife asserted Monday.

Elaine Zeitz Pollard said her husband's parole eligibility was just a smokescreen to discourage protest about the injustice of Mr. Pollard's sentence. "Jonathan's already served twice as long as anyone else convicted of a similar offence in America," she said. "What justification can there be for holding him a moment longer?"

Mr. Pollard, a civilian intelligence analyst for the navy, pleaded guilty to passing secrets to Israel after his arrest in 1985. President Clinton turned down his plea for commutation earlier this year.

"After Jonathan got shafted this way, there is now a law on the books that no one can get more than 10 years for passing classified information to an ally," said Mrs. Pollard, who married Mr. Pollard last year. Mr. Pollard's first wife, Anne Henderson Pollard, convicted of possessing national defence documents, was freed after serving 40 months and moved to Israel, where she divorced Mr. Pollard, in 1990.

Though Mr. Pollard is eligible for parole in the fall of 1995, no board will go against the recommendations of the sentencing judge, the prosecutor and the former secretary of defence, Caspar Weinberger, Mrs. Pollard said.

The final straw, she said, was the manner in which Clinton denied a commutation. "Saying that Jonathan is too dangerous to shave even a minute off his sentence."

Speaking at a midtown synagogue, Mrs. Pollard said she and her husband had decided to make their marriage public so that she could speak for him to try to rouse public condemnation of his treatment.

She declined to talk about any details of their wedding. The Israeli press says it occurred in Butler, N. Site of a medium-security federal prison to which Mr. Pollard was transferred a year ago from the maximum-security penitentiary in Marion, Illinois.

Mrs. Pollard, 38, a resident of Tornado, said she had known Mr. Pollard in the past and they "reconnected" about four years ago.

Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation goes on air

JERICHO (AFP) — Palestinian television has gone on the air for the first time, broadcasting a test card, although the transmission was hampered by the fact that it came from one of the lowest spots on earth.

The Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) for radio and television put out a trial television transmission late Monday beamed from a converted hotel.

The corporation's circular logo, bearing the letters PBC in English, followed by the name in Arabic and the Palestinian flag on the side, was to appear on television screens for 24 hours.

The initial transmission covered Jericho only, and was beamed from a hotel which has been turned into a press centre for the visit of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat, expected here later this month.

As technicians connected cables and put up giant aerials on the roof, painters and carpenters were hurriedly renovating the 30-room building which has been closed to the public.

At a cost of around \$1 million, the television centre's main function will be to cover Mr. Arafat's visit. Transmission to the rest of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will be ready within a week, technicians promised.

After Mr. Arafat's visit is over, the station will continue to operate as a relay for the permanent broadcasting centre, the location of which is at the centre of a dispute between Israel and the PLO.

The Palestinians want to set it up in the Israeli-occupied town of Ramallah, also on the West Bank, where a pre-1967 Jordanian centre stands. But

Israel wants them to stay in Jericho. "We are happy to see the word 'Palestine' on the screen," said corporation head Radwan Abu Ayash. "We've been watching and listening to others, now it's time for others to listen to us."

It is the first ever Palestinian television station. Until recently, the PLO beamed radio programmes from stations in Cairo, Baghdad and Tunis.

However, not all residents were able to tune in their sets to the new station which used a higher frequency channel than usual. Palestinian technicians said they may later adjust the channel for wider reception.

Among the many problems facing the new station is the location of Jericho. At more than 400 metres below sea level, this valley oasis is one of the lowest spots in the world and will make transmission difficult.

"Our plan was to have a main studio in Ramallah, connected with one in Gaza and one in Jericho," Mr. Abu Ayash said. "Because we have no other choice, we will transmit from Jericho although it is terrible from such a low area."

He said two French-made boosting towers were to be placed on a surrounding mountain and on a nearby highway. Most of the small equipment and transmitters was bought from Israel.

A French-donated vehicle for external transmission, and other equipment donated by Germany are on their way to Jericho, he said.

Mr. Abu Ayash said \$55 million were needed to establish the permanent broadcasting centre and its studios, most of which have been promised by the European Union.

Saudi diplomat fears for his life after protesting regime

NEW YORK (AP) — A member of the Saudi Arabian mission to the United Nations went into hiding Monday because he said he feared for his life after speaking out against human rights violations in his country.

Mohammad Abdullah Al Khilawi, in a statement released by his lawyers, said he wrote an urgent letter on May 17 to the crown prince and other top Saudi officials after he "learned through secret documents... of positive proof of the severe violations of human rights in Saudi Arabia."

Mr. Khilawi, a first secretary in the mission, said that in the letter he stated his "sincere opposition to the current regime in Riyadh," accusing it of using family favoritism, corruption and purposeful incitement of hatred to divide and weaken the public.

The country's leaders, he added, had involved Saudi Arabia in wars with Muslim countries and forced the country to enter into nuclear arrangements that risk the lives of its people.

The letter contained demands for the elimination of human rights violations and told Saudi leaders that he had collected almost 14,000 secret documents that prove the current regime is operating illegally, he said.

Within hours of receiving the letter, a Saudi ambassador in Washington telephoned him from Washington to let him know a private jet would bring him there and eventually to a private suite at the Watergate Hotel, he said.

"Based upon my experience, I understood this to be an attempt to kidnap me and return me to Saudi Arabia for the treatment accorded to vocal opponents of the regime," Mr. Khilawi wrote.

He said he delayed responding and was met by a Saudi intelligence officer who offered to buy his silence before threatening his life and lives of his family in New York and in Saudi Arabia.

"I found it necessary to leave my office and home because I fear for my life," he wrote.

"I have added my voice to a growing number of moderate, educated Saudi intellectuals

who can no longer tolerate the abuses of the present Saudi administration," he added.

The statement was released by Michael Wildes, a Manhattan attorney who is representing him along with his father, Leon.

Mr. Wildes said he could not comment on speculation that Mr. Khilawi had asked the United States for asylum.

"We're not prepared to confirm this at this point," Mr. Wildes said.

Saudi Arabia's U.N. mission was closed for the night and senior diplomats could not be reached for comment.

Saudi diplomats at the United Nations, could not be reached for comment late Monday.

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Palestinian businessmen to tour E. Europe

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — A group of 20 Palestinian businessmen is due to fly to Poland on Tuesday to spend two weeks looking for business opportunities in Eastern Europe; the group's organiser said. Hanna Siniora said the businessmen would attend a trade fair in Poland, then visit the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania. "These countries could provide materials such as cement, iron, steel and wood that will be needed to rebuild the Palestinian infrastructure," said Mr. Siniora, who is chairman of the European Palestinian Chamber of Commerce. International donors have promised at least \$2.4 billion to rebuild the Palestinian economy to back the autonomy agreement with Israel. PLO officials would not be travelling with the group, Mr. Siniora said. Many Palestinian economists see the Eastern European countries as more natural trading partners for the developing Palestinian economy than the industrialised Western states.

Qatar firm to set up ferry services in Gulf

DOHA (R) — Qatar plans to introduce a ferry service for cars and passengers between Doha, Bahrain and Dubai ports from October, a Qatar shipping company official said. The company's chairman, Abdul Aziz Hussein Salatt, told its first annual shareholders meeting on Sunday that it finalised contracting arrangements with Britain's Sea Containers Ltd to charter a vessel that can carry 431 passengers and 85 cars. He said details like safe loading, unloading of vehicles and the frequency of the service were still being discussed. He said the company's board of directors had decided to acquire four second-hand ships at a cost of around \$15 million in the near future to transport crude oil, liquefied petroleum gas, iron ore, petrochemicals and other cargoes.

Sikorsky seeks sell helicopters Gulf

DUBAI (AP) — The U.S. Sikorsky aircraft company is bidding to sell its S-70 Seahawk helicopter to the United Arab Emirates navy to help combat Iranian submarines. Sikorsky officials told reporters Monday that negotiations with the Defence Ministry began more than a year ago. "We see the Middle East as a good market and there's a lot of potential for Sikorsky," said Hank van Gorder, the company's Middle East marketing manager. The S-70 variant used by the U.S. Army, the UH-60 Black Hawk, played a key role on the 1991 Gulf war. More than 400 were used on a wide range of military and naval missions as troop transports, electronic jammers, gunships. Hawk variants also have an anti-submarine role, which is a capability Arab Gulf states are seeking to counter Iran's acquisition of three Russian Kilo-class attack submarines. The SH-60B, the U.S. Navy variant of the S-79B, carries sonars for detecting submarines, along with torpedoes and depth charges. So far, the Islamic Republic is the only state in the region with submarines.

Egypt rights group slams military trials

CAIRO (R) — An Egyptian human rights group on Monday expressed its concern at the continued use of military courts to try suspected militants and called on the Egyptian government to ensure defendants' legal rights. The Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights (EOHR) made its statement a day after 17 militants accused of trying to kill the interior minister appeared before military judges. If convicted, the men could face the death penalty. "EOHR's concerns are exacerbated due to the fact that defendants in military courts are denied, by the provisions of military law, their right to appeal to a higher court," the group said. "This point becomes all the more serious considering the increasing frequency of death sentences issued by military courts in these cases (of militants)," it added.

Bomb in Iranian town market hurts 3

NICOSIA (R) — A bomb blast in a market in the southeastern Iranian town of Zahedan injured three people and shattered nearby windows on Monday. Iran's official IRNA news agency said. IRNA said "a relatively powerful sound bomb" went off in the town's central market and local officials were investigating. In March two bombs went off in Zahedan, near the Pakistani border, and an Iranian newspaper said they were set off by a Pakistan-based Sunni Muslim militant group. Iran's population is about 90 per cent Shiite Muslim, with Sunnis living mostly in various border provinces. Zahedan residents said in February that police triggered a riot there while trying to quell a protest by armed men over the destruction of a Sunni mosque in the northern city of Mashhad.

Barzani proposes U.N. protectorate

SALAHEDDIN, Iraq (Agencies) — Kurdish leader Massud Barzani proposed here Monday that Iraqi Kurdistan be turned into a U.N. protectorate to restore peace, following a month of war between rival factions.

Mr. Barzani, head of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), acknowledged in an interview with AFP that the "50-50 arrangement" of sharing power with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) had failed.

"I have had the idea, but now I speak privately not as the leader of the KDP, that we should ask the U.N. to turn Iraqi Kurdistan into a U.N. protectorate in order to demilitarise and stabilise the region," he said.

Mr. Barzani called for armed U.N. forces, not just observers. "The KDP and Jalal Talabani's PUK have controlled northern Iraq in defiance of Baghdad since the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf war, under the protection of Western warplanes. Parliamentary elections were held in May 1992.

But fierce fighting between rival factions broke out in early May and have since claimed more than 600 lives, according to the Iraqi opposition.

"These clashes were the worst event in my whole life. I felt so embarrassed that I couldn't talk to the press directly," Mr. Barzani said.

"We did fail and we have to admit that," he said at his headquarters in the mountain town of Salaheddin, referring to the joint PUK-KDP control of Iraqi Kurdistan.

"Although I forbade my

fighters from fighting until the very moment they had to defend themselves, I couldn't prevent the killing and looting. We couldn't stop this stupid and suicidal war," he said.

"But this problem can be solved by democratic steps. That's why at the beginning of this year, the KDP asked for new (parliamentary) elections," Mr. Barzani said.

The call for elections was a source of the friction which led to the outbreak of fighting at the initiative of the Iraqi National Congress, a coalition of Arab and Kurdish groups, opposed to President Saddam Hussein.

The clashes have divided Iraqi Kurdistan into KDP and PUK zones.

"Four hundred years ago, this region was split into several emirates. We don't want to go back to that period. Nobody has the right to split this region," said Mr. Barzani.

The KDP leader also called for Amnesty International to investigate the fighting in Iraqi Kurdistan.

In Ankara, Turkey an influential panel comprising top leaders recommended Monday that a U.S.-led air force protect Iraqi Kurds should remain longer in Turkey.

The Turkish National Security Council, led by President Suleyman Demirel, said "the current situation in the region" calls for a continuation of the force's mandate. It did not give a specific time frame, but suggested "an appropriate period."

The Security Council has only an advisory role, but it is highly influential. "The Western planes have

monitored the treatment of Iraqi Kurds in northern Iraq since the end of the Gulf war in early 1991. The western planes take daily reconnaissance flights in the no-fly zone in northern Iraq.

The Security Council brings together Prime Minister Tansu Ciller, Chief of General Staff General Dogan Gures and other senior officials.

The ultimate decision on whether to permit the 75 U.S., British and French aircraft to remain at a southern Turkish base will be taken by parliament before the end of this month.

Fighting flares

Fighting between the two main Iraqi Kurdish factions flared anew Tuesday in the five-week-old civil war in northern Iraq and neighbouring Iran was accused of stepping up its involvement in the conflict.

Spokesman for the groups said the clashes were continuing around Qala Diza, 100 kilometres east of Erbil, seat of the government of the quasi-independent enclave established by the U.S.-led alliance after the 1991 Gulf war.

PUK officials said that Iranian Revolutionary Guards and artillery were supporting the KDP and two pro-Iranian Islamic Kurdish groups allied with it.

The clashes shattered the ceasefire agreement reached over the weekend by Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani.

Mr. Tofiq said Iranian revolutionary guards had infiltrated across the border.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77111-19	
PROGRAMMES TWO	
17:00	Ordinary
17:30	N.B.A. sport
18:00	News in French
18:45	Le Journal de l'Histoire
19:00	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Coach
20:55	Jordanique
21:15	The Best of Magic
21:30	The World of The
22:00	News in English
22:30	Poldark
PRAYER TIMES	
6:51	Fajr
6:55	Sunrise
12:51	Dhuhr
16:15	'Asr
19:44	Maghreb
21:18	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish, Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 623785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrence Church Tel. 623366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
St. Epiphanius Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 623226	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624028	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 624195	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 624932	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691	
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295	
WEATHER	
Relative hot weather conditions will prevail with temperatures dropping gradually and winds northwesterly light to moderate. In Aqaba, it will be hot with winds northerly moderate and sea calm.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman	20/33
Aqaba	18/29
Dead Sea	18/26
Jordan Valley	22/38

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 35, Aqaba 40, Humidity readings: Amman 12 per cent, Aqaba 10 per cent.					
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS		EMERGENCIES		HOSPITALS	
NIGHT DUTY				FOR THE TRAVELLER	
				QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
				ARRIVALS	
AMMAN:		Food Control Centre 637111		Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
Dr. Yousef Nasr 751144		Civil Defence Department 661111		09:30 Jeddah (RJ)	
Dr. Yousef Abdo 694916		Civil Defence Immediate 630341		09:30 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)	
Dr. Jamal Ja'bari 796400		Rescue 199		10:15 Larnaca (RJ)	
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyem 620115		Civil Defence Emergency 637777		10:25 Bahrain, Doha 16:00	
First pharmacy 661912		Fire Brigade 891228			
Ferdows pharmacy 778336		Blood Bank 775121		New York, Amsterdam (RJ)	
Al Aqsa pharmacy 637055		Highway Police 843402		17:35 London (RJ)	
Nairookh pharmacy 623672		Traffic Police 896390		18:25 Istanbul (RJ)	
Al Salem pharmacy 636730		Public Security Department 630321		18:25 Barcelona, Paris (RJ)	
Yacoub pharmacy 644945		Hotel Complaints 602800		19:00 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)	
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660		Price Complaints 661176		19:10 Toronto, Montreal (RJ)	
Nairookh pharmacy 623672		Water and Sewerage 897467		19:25 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)	
Najib pharmacy 647632		Complaints 787111		19:30 Rome (RJ)	
		Amman Municipality 787111		00:40 Beirut (RJ)	
		Complaints 787111		01:28 Cairo (RJ)	
		Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121			
		Overseas Calls 010230		Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
		Central Amman Telephone 623101		11:18 Damascus (AZ)	
		Repairs 623101			
		Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101			
		Jordan Television 773111			
		Radio Jordan 774111			
		Water Authority 680100			
		Jordan Electricity Authority 815615			
		Electric Power 636381			
		Company 08-53200			
		RJ Flight Information 08-53200			
		Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200			

U.S. ambassador urges private sector to form new trade partnerships abroad

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — U.S. Ambassador to Jordan Wesley Egan Tuesday urged the Kingdom's business community to take the initiative in forming new trade partnerships abroad and help promote the country's economy.

It is important that the private sector seize the opportunity of the coming peace and try to help Jordan benefit from the fruits of stability by launching serious efforts in trade and by helping towards removing all trade restrictions, said Mr. Egan at a luncheon hosted at the Inter-Continental Hotel by the Amman Rotary Club.

He added that it is incumbent upon the private sector to help the country's drive towards privatisation and attracting new investments as part of the general drive towards stimulating the national economy.

Pointing to concerns of U.S. administration and Congress that the U.S. was annually losing between \$12 and \$15 billion due to violations of intellectual property rights, the ambassador said U.S. firms and businesspersons are encouraged to do business in areas where there are safeguards against such violations.

Referring to U.S. aid to Jordan this year, Mr. Egan said he expected agreement would be reached for a \$28 million grant to the Kingdom which will be utilised to promote cultural, developmental and environmental resources management.

This year also, Washington is supplying \$13 million within the Commodity Import Programme (CIP) and \$14 million for their Services Sector Reform Programme in the form of grants, and another \$15 million in concessional loans within its Food Assistance Programme, said the ambassador.

The CIP was established in 1985 to provide financing to Jordan's public and private sector importers to enable them to import manufactured goods and raw materials necessary to Jordan's economic development.

Mr. Egan said his country would continue to provide support to the government of Jordan to help it develop the national economy, promote its tourism industry and help conduct archaeological excavations, as well as support the Kingdom's efforts to reschedule its foreign debt.

Commenting on remarks by Amman Rotary Club President Suleiman Al Far and rotary members and guests on the Jewish settlements in the occupied Palestinian lands and water issues, Mr. Egan said both of these issues have to be settled through the multilateral and bilateral phases of the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.



U.S. Ambassador to Jordan Wesley Egan, Amman Rotary Club President Suleiman Al

Far and Turkish Ambassador to Jordan Mehmet Irtencelik (left to right) on the dais of the luncheon hosted by the club Tuesday.

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According to the U.S. ambassador, although the question of Jewish settlements has been delayed and other topics have been given priority in the peace negotiations, the water issue takes urgent priority since population growth and increasing economic activities place heavy pressures on the country's water resources.

He said it was up to the countries of the region neighbouring Jordan, as well as the Kingdom itself, to reach a water-sharing formula.

Asked whether the U.S. would reduce its present level of support for Israel after peace has been established, Mr. Egan said he did not expect that to happen.

On the issue of trade via Aqaba, he said he was encouraged by reports that the Jordanian government and the London-based Lloyd's Register agency were conducting negotiations to observe the enforcement of the U.N. sanctions against Iraq.

Referring directly to the embargo on Iraq, Mr. Egan said that he did not expect it to be lifted soon.

The sanctions continues to be reexamined by the Security Council every 60 days, in order to determine when they can be lifted, he added. The ambassador said that not a single member of the 13-member council has yet formally requested the lifting of the sanctions.

The luncheon was attended by the Turkish ambassador to Jordan and the charge d'affaires of South Africa in Amman among prominent businesspersons and other guests.

10 groups formed to draft papers for Beijing conference on women

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Ten groups were formed Tuesday at a preparatory national conference on Jordan's participation in the International Women's Conference scheduled for September 1995 in Beijing.

Addressing more than 200 delegates from various institutions, Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, who will head the Kingdom's delegation to Beijing, said the country's participation is essential and "hopefully both the public and official representatives will help reflect a positive image of Jordan."

Princess Basma had earlier announced the formation of an executive office that will act as a link between the various bodies, official and non-official, that will participate in the 1995 world gathering. The Princess had also announced that Shadia Nusseir, of the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF), will head the executive office.

Ms. Nusseir told the Jordan Times Tuesday that this is the first non-governmental organisation activity in preparation for the Beijing conference, and it aimed at encouraging public involvement.

"We have divided the topics to 10 issues and divided the participants to 10 groups to discuss the relevant papers, and each group came up with certain recommendations," Ms. Nusseir said.

In Tuesday's meeting these groups split up to discuss topics to be included in Jordan's national paper to the Beijing conference.

One such topic was women's rights in Jordan and trying to locate the obstacles that prevent women from obtaining their full rights.

Another group discussed human rights from an international perspective and tried to evaluate the status of human rights in Jordan.

Participants also suggested focusing on women's status in the Kingdom in terms of improving women's education, training women and providing health and social programmes for their benefit.

In the small business sector, participants suggested evaluating women's working role in Jordan and studying the obstacles to women in or planning to join the labour force.

The 10 committees established Tuesday, she said, will



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Tuesday addresses a national preparatory conference for the 1995 International Women's Conference in Beijing. On the podium are

Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, president of the General Federation of Jordanian Women and Shadia Nusseir of the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (Photo by Rana Hussein)

participants demanded more importance on women's role in international affairs and also discussed women's political future in Jordan.

In addition, participants suggested studying women's social, economic, health and educational status and ways to improve it.

Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, president of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), said Jordan's participation in the 1995 conference will help explain Jordanian women's status and expand public awareness of the importance of supporting women's affairs.

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aid in listing the priorities to be adopted in the U.N. Agenda for the 1996-2000 period.

The participating groups concluded the meeting with each submitting suggestions and recommendations for the forum that will be presented to the September 1995 conference.

According to Ms. Nusseir, another two conferences on the regional level will be held in November. One will be for the countries of the region in coordination with the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the second for non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

NHF to start training Iranian delegation

AMMAN (J.T.) — After being accredited by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a regional training centre for the Eastern Mediterranean region, Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) will Wednesday organise a 10-day training programme for an Iranian delegation, according to an NHF statement.

The training programme, organised for the first time by NHF's Quality of Life Project (QOL), which was initiated in 1989 in cooperation with the WHO and the Ministry of Health, aims at introducing Jordan's experience in applying the basic minimum needs (BMN) approach to improve the quality of life in the rural areas.

It includes lectures and workshops on the philosophy and strategy of the BMN

approach, its survey, results and management as well as visits to the Jordanian villages where the QOL project is being implemented, discussion and evaluation sessions.

The programme will be attended by Iranian experts in health and development as well as QOL project employees. Other training programmes will be held at the end of this month for delegations from Iran and Egypt.

The success of the Jordanian experience is represented through the basic development achievements realised by the QOL project in the beneficiary villages which witnessed an improvement in housing and health conditions, women literacy, motherhood and childhood health care and increase in income, said the statement.

NMC to present its own in song recital, concert

AMMAN (J.T.) — The National Music Conservatory (NMC)/Noor Al Hussein Foundation will present a recital by soprano Lexi Haddadin accompanied by pianist Samia Ghannoum and violinist Alla Rozumiak at 8:00 p.m. on Thursday at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC).

The programme includes songs and lyrics by Brahms, Schubert, Puccini, Strauss, Mozart and others.

Lexi Haddadin studied voice at Augustana College, in North Dakota, U.S., where she participated in several recitals, choirs and music theatre performances.

Samia Ghannoum studied piano in Amman and continued her studies at the British Royal School of Music. She is a faculty member at the National

Music Conservatory and is also choir conductor of Ahliyah and Amman National schools choirs. Ms. Ghannoum also participated in establishing the choir of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) in Amman and is a member of the choir.

The Russian violinist, Alla Rozumiak, is a member of the faculty at the conservatory. She left her work as concert soloist at the Opera Theatre in Poland to join the NMC in Jordan as a violin teacher and concert master of the conservatory's orchestra.

On Wednesday the orchestra of the NMC will perform at 8:00 p.m. at the RCC. The programme includes pieces by Mozart, Haydn, Schubert, Handel and Dvorak.

Germany helps water authority study distribution network

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Water Authority is conducting a wide-ranging study on water distribution networks in the Greater Amman region with financial assistance from the German government, according to Qasbi Qteishat, the Water Authority director.

He told the Jordan Times Tuesday that the German government is conducting the study and providing the experts as a grant. Later the authority will implement a JD 30 million project over four to five years to "rehabilitate the water network" in order to minimise water losses from faulty pipes.

The project will also entail the installation of a network for channelling waste water from Ein Ghazal in east Amman to the Khirbat Al Samra waste water treatment plant near Zarqa, according to Mr. Qteishat.

The project study grant is being provided by the German Development Bank, said Mr. Qteishat, who returned Monday evening from a visit to Germany where he held related talks with bank officials.

According to a working paper submitted by the Ministry of Water and Irrigation to a symposium on water management organised in Amman last November, more than half of Jordan's production of water for domestic purposes goes unaccounted for, thus posing one of the most serious problems facing water management in the Kingdom.

The paper cited leakage, illegal usage, unmetered deliveries and human error as the main causes of unaccounted water.

The Water Authority will finance the maintenance and rehabilitation project through its own means and loans obtained from different sources, said Mr. Qteishat.

He said that during the week-long visit to Germany he toured several waste water treatment plants to study their systems and discussed with the water authority in Nuremberg the prospect of "twinning" that authority with Amman's in a concept to pave the ground for mutual cooperation in water related affairs.

Chief justice approves pre-marriage blood tests

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Ministry of Health has acquired the approval of the office of the Chief Islamic Justice in Amman to draft regulations requiring certain couples planning to marry, Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas said Tuesday.

Chief Justice Sheikh Izzedin Al Khatib Al Tamimi informed the health minister that his office approved the measure as it does not conflict with religious beliefs.

Dr. Malhas told the Jordan Times that the ministry will start drawing up the necessary regulations immediately.

The regulations require the approval of the Council of Ministers, but no endorsement is required from Parliament as they do not constitute a law, he explained.

In an earlier statement to the Jordan Times, Dr. Malhas said that the proposed regulations would require couples to undergo blood tests before their nuptials to determine if

either partner suffers from any blood disease and other genetic problems that could result in their children being born with congenital malformation or retardation.

The minister said that he was enlisting the help of the office of the chief justice concerning the ministry's intentions to issue the regulations before taking the next move.

According to Dr. Malhas, no proper survey has been conducted in the Kingdom determined the causes of congenital malformation or retardation. But he cited intermarriages and blood diseases as two major factors that could result in the delivery of disabled children.

After the regulations have been published and implemented, couples planning to marry will be required to obtain a certificate showing the results of the blood tests from the Ministry of Health.

The certificate will determine what kind of birth defects (if any) could be expected and any other blood diseases either partner might have.

Air transport workers union member denies she resigned from presidency

By Karonza M. Jadoun
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Sou'ad Bakir, recently elected president of the Air Transport Workers Union (ATWU), has denied reports in the local media that she resigned her post at the union.

Ms. Bakir, who won the ATWU presidency with an overwhelming 697 votes against the second highest recipient with 458 votes, said that the installation of Abdul Halim Khaddam as the new president is illegal, and she refuses to accept what she described as an attempt to belittle her and Jordanian women.

According to Article 84 of the union's regulations, the administrative committee has the right to change administrative posts by calling for a new election whenever it deems necessary, provided the proposed change is on the agenda distributed to union members three days prior their next scheduled meeting.

According to administrative committee member Nabil Salem, union members met in mid-May and approved the administrative committee's proposal to hold

new elections. On May 28 ATWU members again cast ballots for the union's president, said Mr. Salem. According to Mr. Salem, Ms. Bakir obtained only one vote in the second election.

"Personally I was against the idea, yet eight of the 11 (administrative committee) members thought that another vote should be conducted," said Mr. Salem without elaborating.

He stressed, however, that Ms. Bakir was among those who favoured a new election. "The whole process was perfectly legal," he said.

Mr. Khaddam, the most recently-elected ATWU president, who is also president of the central council of the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions, said that when Ms. Bakir was first elected, she received the votes of Al Ata bloc, which had three of its own members running for president of the ATWU, on condition and in a prior agreement with Ms. Bakir that she resigns from the presidency after one month.

Mr. Khaddam said that Ms. Bakir agreed to give her bloc of votes to the Al Ata

bloc in the new election. When she did not quit as previously agreed, Mr. Khaddam added, her earlier supporters turned against her.

But Mr. Bakir (34) denied claims that she had resigned or could not shoulder her responsibilities as ATWU president.

She accused those who made such allegations as being against women in positions of leadership. She blamed union members for these allegations which, she maintained, were directed at deriding her for their own purposes.

Ms. Bakir said the problem is "that union members do not want a woman to preside over them."

She has contacted the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW) to discuss the matter but has received no response yet.

Mr. Khaddam, however, denied Ms. Bakir's charges of sexism and said that she lacked experience in union work.

Mr. Salem agreed with Mr. Khaddam saying: "I think that Ms. Bakir has not spent enough time proving herself. She is new in the business and she needed more time." He said he was against revoting.

but that this was the wish of the majority of the administrative committee.

"It's good to have women in the union, but also it's democracy," Mr. Salem added.

According to Ms. Bakir there is disorganisation in the union.

"Members cannot agree on anything. Everyone is after the office (of president), it is not a matter of responsibility," said Ms. Bakir.

Mr. Khaddam on this point agreed with Ms. Bakir saying that eight of the committee members are new in the field. "They sky-rocketed from the base of the pyramid to its peak," he said.

According to Mr. Khaddam, he has already begun work in his new post and convened a meeting last Monday. He added that Ms. Bakir was absent from the meeting.

Ms. Bakir said she has referred the matter of her presidency to the ATWU general assembly. "I am waiting to see what happens, but I cannot continue in such a situation in a union which cannot agree on anything. I will eventually resign, but after I make myself clear."

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King confers medal on Chilean envoy

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday conferred upon outgoing Chilean Ambassador Nelson Haddadin the Istiklal Medal of the First Order on the occasion of the end of his tour of duty in Jordan. The medal was presented to Mr. Haddadin by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan at a special lunch banquet held in his honour. Mr. Haddadin leaves Amman to become Santiago's ambassador to Egypt.

Princess Sarvath receives Ambassador Foundation team

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath received Tuesday at the Royal Court a representative of the Ambassador Foundation of the United States and a delegation of its American volunteers who have been working at the Young Women's Muslim Association (YWMA) and at the Amman Baccalaureate School. Princess Sarvath thanked the U.S. foundation for the work of its volunteers.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FLIGHT FOR LIFE ACTIVITIES

- ★ Lecture: "Wings Over Jordan," by Judy Leden of the microlight team, on Thursday at the British Council at 6:00 p.m.
- ★ Fund-raising Dinner: for the Cancer Research Campaign, sponsored by Royal Jordanian at the Inter-Continental Hotel, Thursday at 8:30 p.m., tickets JD 20.
- ★ Open Day Flying: with the microlight team of world champions and the Royal Jordanian Gliding Club, on Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Tickets JD 5.
- ★ Oud Recital: by Munir Bashir at the Royal Cultural Centre, Saturday at 8:00 p.m. Tickets JD 5.
- ★ Proceeds will go to support the work of the Cancer Research Campaign.
- For information call Royal Jordanian Gliding Club 891-401 (253) or Friends of Archaeology 696782.

RECITAL

- ★ National Music Conservatory Orchestra, at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

WORLD CUP USA 1994

- ★ Arabic language video series of World Cup football matches entitled "World Cup USA 1994" at the American Center auditorium (4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.).

FILM

- ★ Film in English entitled "Gilda" at the Phoenix Gallery for Art and Culture at 7:00 p.m. (Tel. 695291).

SEMINAR

- ★ Seminar in Arabic entitled "Natural Reserves — Are They a Necessity or What?" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

LECTURE

- ★ Lecture entitled "Aux Sources De La Fontaine" by May Mndhafar and Gérard Martinez at the French Cultural Centre at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Painting exhibition by Jordanian artist Abdul Ra'uf Shumoun at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Lweibdeh. Also showing "permanent" exhibition of 56 Arab contemporary artists (Tel. 643251/2).
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by artist Mohammad Al Ameri entitled "Body" at Baladna Art Gallery (Tel. 687598).
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Fatima El-Helu at Goethe-Institut.
- ★ Ceramics exhibition by artist Huda Qassem at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition of Chinese paintings at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Amman.
- ★ Photography exhibit entitled "Faces of Jordan" at the American Center.
- ★ Exhibition by artist Isam Yankawi at Balqa Art Gallery in Fuhls (Tel. 720677).

Jordan Times

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Single standard for all

THE STANDOFF between North Korea, on the one hand, and Washington and its allies in the U.N. Security Council on the other, over Pyongyang's refusal to accept inspection of its nuclear facilities threatens to escalate to ominous proportions when and if the council adopts any sanctions against the Kim II Song regime. The tug-of-war between the two sides also highlights the issue of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as per the Non-Proliferation Treaty against the backdrop of double standards in the application of the objectives of the treaty under which the privileged nuclear states sought to prevent other countries from joining their club.

At a time when all states and societies concede that nuclear and thermonuclear arsenals should not be used or even built, certain capitals in the world, notably the permanent members of the Security Council, have aggressively developed their military nuclear capabilities to the maximum. Some nuclear powers possess enough such mass destruction weapons to blow up Earth many times over. The manufacture and testing of nuclear bombs went on also in spite of the repeated U.N. General Assembly resolutions and several international treaties that regarded their deployment as constituting crimes against humanity.

Against this backdrop, the heavy-handed attempts by certain permanent members of the Security Council to inspect North Korea's nuclear programme appear lacking at least from a moral point of view. Here in the Middle East, where Israel has been allowed to develop its own nuclear weapons systems without causing as little as a wink by the big powers, there is a vivid vision of the double standards adopted by the West.

It must be remembered that both India and Pakistan were once the subject of a similar campaign which ended up being frustrated simply because the hands of those who were calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons were not exactly clean.

We would like to see the major nuclear powers offer an example to the other countries which still covet the same system of offence or defence. The least that we expect them to do is to renounce the use of such mass destruction weapons before they ask others to forswear their manufacture and possession. This is not likely to happen for obvious reasons. Meanwhile the insistence that North Korea or any other country for that matter yield to international inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) continues to be morally hollow even though we would want to see nothing less than an end to North Korea's nuclear programme. Pyongyang should seize upon this opportunity not to escape international surveillance but rather to lobby for the application of a single standard in the quest for a nuclear free world.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i Arabic daily criticised the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) except Qatar for siding with the Yemeni Socialist Party, which is trying to secede southern Yemen. Tariq Masarwah said that all of a sudden we find the GCC countries trying to help southern Yemen to end the unity of Yemen and their foreign ministers' statement declaring their countries intention to interfere in the war in Yemen should be taken as a clear indication of the Arab' countries intentions. These threats could be serious but could mean that these countries would not use their own forces or weapons, but would rather finance an operation which could be undertaken by the 70,000 American troops stationed in the Arabian Peninsula since the Gulf crisis, the writer pointed out. He said that the Arab World hopes that nothing of this kind would happen and no Arab or foreign intervention in Yemen would take place, "because wars are a costly business that would waste the Arab Nation's wealth." Indeed, he said, war in Yemen is not an easy task for any one, as the difficult environment and terrain in Yemen had proved impossible to control under the Turks, the Egyptian and other countries.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour criticised calls for a government decision to open the door for importing table salt, saying imports of commodities that can be produced locally can by no means be beneficial to the country's economy. Mohammad Daoud said instead the government should stimulate efforts and take various necessary measures to meet the shortages like giving incentives for producers of this basic commodity. The writer said that it is in the best interest of the Kingdom to give a chance to the cooperative society that produces the salt to expand its business and secure more investments in this industry.

Washington Watch

By Dr. James Zogby

Republicans prepare to run in 1996

THE REPUBLICAN field of presidential candidates is more wide open than it has been in many years. Typically, there is at least one candidate who is considered the early favourite for the nomination. But the Republican Party today is more divided than it has been in 30 years, and even within each faction there is no clear front-runner.

The descent from the dominant Republican coalition which produced victories in six of the past seven presidential elections to the current fractious state has been swift, and the causes lie in the recent history of the party.

No sooner had George Bush lost his 1992 reelection bid than an intense ideological debate developed within the Republican Party. Conservatives argued that Mr. Bush had failed to maintain the pure and powerful conservative message that had manufactured the dominant victories of the Reagan years. Republican moderates countered that the views of voters had changed, and that the rigidity of the conservative message had alienated many women voters, affluent professionals and blue collar workers, that cost the party the election.

And as early as July 1993, several leading Republican personalities had announced the formation of their own political organisations, designed to shape the public debate on political issues and to mobilise voter support for their views. Contrary to some criticisms, these organisations (founded by such figures as former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Jack Kemp, former Secretary of Education William Bennett, Senator Bob Dole, 1992 presidential candidate Pat Buchanan, and Massachusetts Governor William Weld) were not in and of themselves launching pads for 1996 presidential campaigns. They are platforms for promoting the political vision their respective leaders believe the party must adopt if it is to win back its position of national leadership.

It is true, however, that these organisations do help keep alive the political ambitions of their founders by providing them with regular media attention national visibility on the one hand while developing a base of volunteers, contributors and potential voters.

As the Republicans have come to see President Bill Clinton as vulnerable, the race to succeed him in 1996 is heating up. It is far too early to count Mr. Clinton out for 1996 or to count the Republicans back in. Nevertheless, several Republican leaders have already taken steps to seriously position themselves for the race for the White House.

To secure the Republican nomination to challenge President Clinton in 1996, a candidate must emerge victorious from a gruelling national campaign in the Republican primaries. And in order to do that, most political analysts agree that a candidate must meet some basic prerequisites:

— A strong, organised base of supporters who will work and vote for the candidate is absolutely essential.

— The ability to raise the large sums of money needed to run a national campaign will also be crucial, as estimates of the money needed for the first three weeks of the primary season range from \$7-10 million — with a total of \$30 million required to win the nomination.

— A candidate must project a simple, clear and convincing message that will attract the media and provide voters with a compelling alternative to the Clinton programme.

— The first three factors must be translated in a win in the primary races in the first states to hold those elections, which by tradition are Iowa and New Hampshire. Such a victory will provide a boost to the candidate's campaign by capturing the attention of the national media, increasing the flow of campaign contributions, and begin the process of securing the delegates who will assure the candidate of the nomination at the party's convention in July.

With these factors in mind, a look at the current list of contenders for the Republican nomination yields the following

early projection of their prospects for 1996.

Senator Robert Dole

Mr. Dole is the minority leader of the U.S. Senate, the most visible and powerful position of any Republican in the United States, and he can use this position to his advantage.

Among his assets are the simple fact that Mr. Dole has run national campaigns before, twice as a serious candidate for his party's nomination for president and once as the Republican nominee for Vice President (in the losing campaign of 1976). He has the greatest name recognition of any Republican and has a proven ability to raise money and build an organisation.

Jack Kemp

In some ways, Jack Kemp is the most interesting of the Republican hopefuls for 1996. He is still a relatively young man and his stature as a former star professional football player makes him appealing to youthful voters, and his overall reputation makes him appealing to African-Americans and blue collar workers — three groups whose votes the Republicans will need in 1996.

To many, Mr. Kemp was the heir-apparent to the Reagan mantle, conservative, charismatic and capable of building a majority coalition. He can raise money and has a loyal national political organisation. But Mr. Kemp's independence and his strong political views have alienated many other party leaders. A Kemp victory would be a decisive one.

James Baker

There are few pundits or party leaders who doubt James Baker's effectiveness as a political manager. He served both Mr. Reagan and Mr. Bush in several capacities and with the exception of his role in Bush's losing 1992 campaign, he has won positive reviews for his work. But he has recently come under attack from former Vice President Dan Quayle, who wrote that Mr. Baker's role in the Bush administration was overrated. Mr. Quayle contends that Mr. Baker was more dependent on Mr. Bush than Mr. Bush was on Mr. Baker.

There is no doubt that Mr. Baker can raise the money to run but there are strong doubts that he can build a large base of supporters for his campaign. He has never run for national office, nor has he articulated the type of political vision on which to base a campaign.

His recognised forte is in foreign affairs — not in the issues that appeal to most voters.

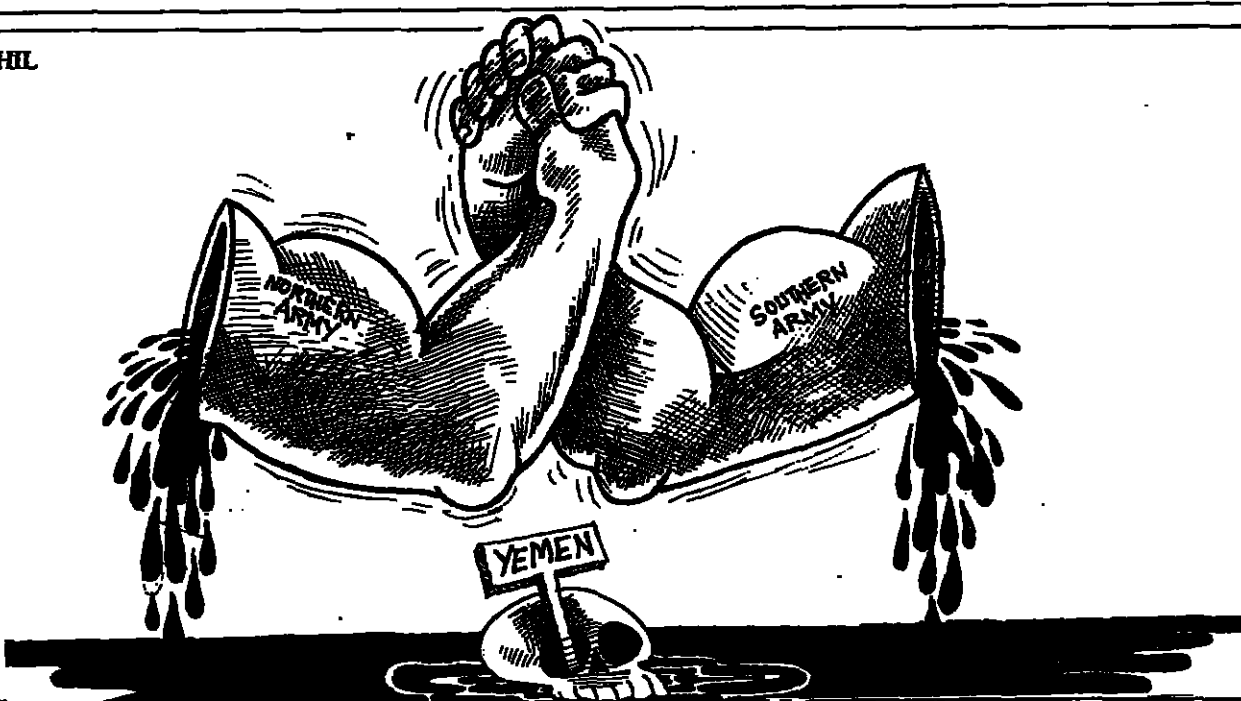
Richard Cheney

Many assess Dick Cheney's chances to be the same as Mr. Baker's. He has good name recognition, a strong record in foreign affairs and of service to a number of Republican presidents; but he has no experience in the type of campaigning that produces a nominee. Although he served in Congress for 12 years and excelled as a cabinet secretary, many doubt that Mr. Cheney has the type of skills required to wage and win a national campaign.

Dan Quayle

While it is always unwise to discount a former vice president who is campaigning for president, Mr. Quayle appears to have too many obstacles to overcome before he could win the nomination. He does have many loyal followers, but the press and a large percentage of the voting public refuse to take him seriously. After being the object of too many public jokes during his four years in office, it is difficult to imagine that Mr. Quayle can reconstruct his public image and mount a successful campaign for president.

M. KAHIL



China is key to effective sanctions

By Donald M. Rothberg
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — China is the key to effective sanctions against North Korea, a reality that could force the Clinton administration to adopt a painfully cautious strategy for using economic pressure against the Pyongyang regime.

After North Korea prevented international inspectors from determining whether it has diverted plutonium from a nuclear reactor, the United States began pressing for U.N. sanctions.

President Bill Clinton met Saturday with British Prime Minister John Major at Chequers, the government's country estate near London, and said later that North Korea's conduct has made it "virtually imperative" that the United Nations take action on sanctions.

That view was endorsed by South Korea and Japan after a two-day meeting with U.S. officials at the State Department.

But how fast and how effective sanctions would be remained an unanswered question.

"North Korea is so near the subsistence level now that it's very difficult to have sanctions that would have an immediate bite," said Donald Gregg, former U.S. ambassador to South Korea and now

president of the Korea Society. "It's certainly better than pre-emptive (military) strikes."

Mr. Gregg called sanctions "a terribly blunt instrument," and said they could provoke the North Koreans into military action.

North Korea has called sanctions "an act of war." Mr. Clinton strongly disagreed. "Clearly, any sanctions are not an act of war and should not be seen as such," Mr. Clinton said. "All we want them to do is keep their word."

Now that Mr. Clinton has started the movement towards sanctions, pulling back could be seen as another foreign policy retreat.

"The worst thing would be for the administration right now to start backing away from sanctions," said David Kay, who was one of the principal International Atomic Energy Agency officials involved in the showdown with Iraq over inspection of its nuclear facilities.

There is no doubt about the importance of China to any sanctions strategy. Beijing has said repeatedly it does not approve of sanctions as a strategy against Pyongyang.

As one of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, China could veto any proposal. To avoid a

veto, the administration is considering a go-slow approach that would begin with little more than symbolic measures to demonstrate international displeasure with North Korea's recalcitrance.

That approach would leave untouched the flow of oil and food from China to North Korea. The other item of international significance of Pyongyang is the cash Koreans living in Japan send home to relatives. Amounting to as much as \$600 million a year, that money is an important source of foreign currency for the Communist regime.

Administration officials say they believe China is growing impatient with the government of Kim II Song. That may have been reflected in an article in a Hong Kong newspaper supported by Beijing that said China would cut off oil and food supplies if the U.N. enacted an embargo.

But the government in Beijing continued to emphasize the need for patient diplomacy.

William Taylor, a senior analyst at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, is sceptical of the effectiveness of sanctions.

"Sanctions have never worked anywhere, anytime, with the possible exception of South Africa," he said.

Mr. Taylor visited North

Korea in April and said that if sanctions are imposed "the tension is going to go up big time," in terms of military danger.

Bruce Cumings, a professor of East Asian history at the University of Chicago and author of a book on the origins of the Korean war, said he doubts North Korea would respond to sanctions by launching a military strike.

"I'm sure they will bark very loudly," he said.

Among the advocates of a tough line against North Korea is James Lilley, a former U.S. ambassador to South Korea and later to China.

"If you appease the North Koreans, they'll take advantage of you," he said during an appearance Friday on Fox News. "What you need is a very strong, unambiguous deterrent. If they turn to force, they will be obliterated."

But Mr. Gregg believes the need is for more diplomacy, saying the United States must make clear to Pyongyang "specifically what's in it for them if they wrap up the nuclear option and put it aside."

"I think it's their hole card and they're not going to put down their hole card unless we call their hand. And we really have never called their hand. We've never told them what it was worth to us to see their hole card," he said.

LETTERS

Mind control

To the Editor:

Rami Khouri's article, "The media, the past and the challenge," (Jordan Times April 19) and British scriptwriter Susan Bennett's response from London (Jordan Times, April 24), have prompted me to reflect on what Mr. Khouri (referring specifically to Jordan Radio and Television (JRTV) terms a regression in the media "perhaps due to the fears and uncertainties that are associated with a region in the midst of historic change."

In common with Mr. Khouri and Ms. Bennett, my professional life is closely tied to the broadcast media, as are the personal lives of the millions of viewers who believe "that it must be true because we saw it on TV."

Mr. Khouri worries about "mind control," but appreciates that "the media sometimes should go along with government desires on very sensitive issues or relations with foreign donors in times of crisis." Surely it depends on which foreign donors, and what strings are attached to the donations. It is never wise to bite the hand that feeds you, unless that hand has a chain round your neck and shackles on your feet. Then it becomes an issue of mind control plus loss of liberty and democracy.

We are indebted to Ms. Bennett for her concise overview of the development of Britain's TV industry, and Messrs. Nabil Sawalha and Hisham Yonis for "challenging and developing her views." May I respectfully point out, as a fellow scriptwriter and TV producer, having spent the greater part of my adult life in the Middle East, that my memories of the British media, within its historic context, may be rather less simplistic than those of Ms. Bennett, and that her "limited knowledge of Jordanian affairs" would require rather more than a couple of weeks with the Nabil-Hisham Theatre Company to gain anything of value, artistically or otherwise, from her "exposure to other cultures".

Or have I misunderstood, and Ms. Bennett feels that Jordanians (other than Nabil and Hisham) are to harvest the fruit of her "cooperative creation" via Med-Media and Transworld? Surely she cannot believe that Jordanians have never been exposed to other cultures, placed as we have been for untempered millennia at the gateway between East and West; the very cradle of civilisation, however quaint that view may be to the "younger, more educated" people of Europe.

Now way back in my childhood when no one left school illiterate; when BBC TV transmitted "live", and BBC Radio produced comedies such as ITMA; the state was turning out "controlled" films as a policy to raise public morale in a Britain which was losing the war. (World War II).

Comedy was used as a counter-propaganda weapon to hide the true facts of a grim situation, and war "fiction" rather than fact was transmitted by all sides in the conflict.

In the fifties, when Ms. Bennett begins her thesis, the political slogans in Britain were "I'm all right Jack", and "You've never had it so good."

A nice piece of P.R. from Prime Minister Winston Churchill, the self-confessed Zionist who had been instrumental in implementing the infamous Balfour Declaration, which secretly handed over British "owned" Palestine to the Zionists as a new "Jewish" homeland, in return for Zionist funds and American involvement in the latter days of the war. (Another nice little P.R. job!).

With millions of Britain's youth lying dead on the battlefields of Europe, North Africa and the Far East, Zionist funds and the Zionist media barons sprang into action. After all, a deal is a deal (secret and unjust though it may be!).

Britain "won" the war but gradually lost to the Americans an empire which had gathered its raw materials from enslaved nations in order to feed a "small island's" industries.

It is a fact of life that controlling the media means controlling the people. Money talks and big money talks big. People with a vote but without a radio-T.V. engineering degree are "easy meat" for the propagandists. Its called in large corporations "How to screw the average man."

Professional quality exists but where are the ethics? Since, the 1980's Britain's independent "yuppie" TV producers have indeed given the illiterate, unemployed, dole-queue, hopeless British youth, a view of life on the other side of the tracks, interspersed with mindless soap operas, TV violence and sex pops, plus a whole lot of other things which cannot replace a young person's right to a secure job and the dignity of employment.

But now we come to the crux of Ms. Bennett's letter-the "heart of the fruit". She states, "The small independent production companies... could not simply look to the home market for the funds to finance their enterprises... The E.C. with great foresight has provided many sources of funding to enable programme makers to set up coproductions with other countries in Europe."

Nabil and Hisham must surely have told Ms. Bennett about the current situation for most of our local independent production companies. With traditional markets in the Gulf closed, and the Western allies there boycotting any TV production which casts a single Jordanian artiste, the companies, which had invested fortunes in electronic production equipment and studios, now face bankruptcy, mortgage foreclosures and equipment worth one seventh of cost price.

Naturally this does not apply to a comedy theatre which sells tickets direct to the public. That is, to some extent "tax exempt." It has a cast of three and a couple of other employees.

As for our "large monolithic body with many regular employees", JRTV employs in the region of 1,500 staff; all on inadequate salaries, hamstringed by red tape and petty bureaucracy and with a great deal more on their minds than "a more diverse, original creative vision."

Their main creative thinking is restricted to how to feed their families, and in the absence of an enlightened, paternalistic director general, it should come as no surprise that some are tempted into moonlighting and petty graft in the face of "fears and uncertainties."

Would Ms. Bennett advocate turning them out to join the ranks of the unemployed, while selecting a few to remain as commissioning editors? Commissioning whom to do what? We still do have at JRTV a few of the original staff of the sixties, who were then young and dedicated, eager and idealistic, hardworking, creative and professionally trained.

Unfortunately we are now caught up in the "punish Jordan" syndrome and the age of the multi-billions petro-dollar satellite wars.

The new Saudi satellite media barons (whose home country bans the use of home-satellite dishes for fear of corrupting the masses) are setting up empires in Rome and tempting away some of our most able electronic engineers and technicians. Poor old JRTV, whose equipment has a "built-in obsolescence factor," and a shorter and ever shorter "life" span, may be upgraded at a cost of millions (including retraining all the staff).

We are caught in the treadmill of the necessity to "conform", in engineering terms, to upgraded production and transmission requirements if we don't want to transmit to ourselves alone, and the Saudi barons and their advisors will meanwhile beam to our home satellites what they decide is good for us — or them. Who supervises the quality and content there?

This could be mind control well outside the jurisdiction of present we are "sitting ducks."

These are the modern "views from the Holy Land" and decisive immediate action must be taken and massively financed, if our only TV station is not to founder permanently. Or is that what "somebody" has planned?!!

Marag McKay,
Amman.

Peres' Jerusalem letter ignites row

Text of Peres' letter

Jerusalem, October 11, 1993

Dear Minister Holst,

I wish to confirm that the Palestinian (sic) institutions of East Jerusalem and the interests and well-being of the Palestinians (sic) of East Jerusalem are of great importance and will be preserved. Therefore, all the Palestinian (sic) institutions of East Jerusalem, including the economic, social, educational, and cultural, and the hold Christian and Muslim places, are performing an essential task for the Palestinian (sic) population.

Needless to say, we will not hamper their activity; on the contrary, the fulfillment of this important mission is to be encouraged.

Sincerely,
Shimon Peres
Foreign Minister of Israel

deal. Mr. Peres said he wrote the letter to keep the PLO in peace talks.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat sparked a right-wing fury in Israel last month when he said Israel promised him in a letter the PLO would be responsible for Jerusalem's Muslim and Christian holy sites.

The government denied writing Mr. Arafat a letter. The letter to Mr. Holst says: "All the Palestinian institutions of East Jerusalem, including the economic, social, educational and cultural, and the Holy Christian and Muslim places, are performing an essential task for the Palestinian population."

"Needless to say, we will not hamper their activity," Dan Meridor, of the main opposition Likud Party and a former justice minister, said it was a sad day when Israelis were torn between believing Mr. Arafat and their government.

Mr. Peres accused the right wing of "character assassina-

tion," insisting the letter was not to Mr. Arafat and made no commitment other than to the status quo existing in Jerusalem before the peace deal.

Mr. Peres defended himself during a stormy debate in parliament.

"You were caught lying, red-handed," charged opposition right-wing Likud Party leader Benjamin Netanyahu. "You lied to parliament. Are there any more letters?"

"Shame on you," added the Likud's former justice minister, Dan Meridor.

"It's Yasser Arafat who told the truth. This letter is not a question of access to the holy sites but the PLO's hold over Jerusalem," he said.

"Our credibility is not at stake," replied Mr. Peres. "We have given no commitment to the PLO or Arafat. They are not mentioned in this letter."

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin as well as Mr. Peres had denied such a Jerusalem letter existed.

Mr. Peres, shouting over the hecklers in parliament, pledged that Jerusalem would remain under Israeli sovereignty.

"Our capital will remain united... it will not be part of autonomy," he said before walking out.

Mr. Netanyahu said he had information from army sources that the government was preparing to release hundreds of prisoners from the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, which opposes autonomy and is fighting on against Israel.

Israel has pledged in the autonomy accords to start negotiations on a permanent settlement for the Palestinians, including on the question of Jerusalem, after two years of autonomy.

Mr. Peres said Israel would ensure the Palestinian authority running Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho would not be allowed in Jerusalem, particularly in Palestinian headquarters at the Orient House.

Asked what would happen if Palestinians used Orient House, opened shortly after Middle East peace talks began in 1991, to run autonomy, Mr. Peres was unequivocal.

"We will close the place," he told Israel radio, later adding: "Jerusalem is closed politically but open religiously."

Faisal Al Hussein, top PLO official in the West Bank who presides over Orient House, said: "The Orient House stays in place carrying the same service it was carrying out until we enter into the final stage and until we reach a final solution, God willing."

Cabinet reshuffle

(Continued from page 1)

May 1993.

The sources said the reshuffle, which became imminent Saturday after the government announced it was starting fresh talks with Israel, was meant to strengthen the Cabinet of Dr. Majali at a time when major progress was expected in the peace process and the opposition to the government was growing in Parliament.

According to well informed observers, Dr. Hindawi, a former deputy prime minister and chief of the Royal Court, agreed to join the Cabinet after he was assured he would be given a key role in running internal affairs.

Sources said the Royal Court supported Dr. Majali in his efforts to form a strong government.

Observers said that Dr. Majali was expected to succeed in securing the necessary political strength for his Cabinet in the new reshuffle, noting that the previous change in November of some cabinet members failed to achieve this purpose.

Analysts said the acceptance of Dr. Hindawi to serve in the government gave Dr. Majali the breakthrough he needed to form a politically strong government.

Dr. Hindawi, who refused to join Dr. Majali's Cabinet when it was formed in May and rejected another offer to serve on it in November's reshuffle, was influential in talking deputies into joining the Cabinet, sources said.

The sources said Dr. Hindawi pushed for the inclusion of deputies in the Cabinet because he would not have entered a Cabinet that does not have the necessary power base.

"The participation of Dr. Hindawi in the government is extremely important and will strengthen the term of the Cabinet, which was going to change two months ago," said a former official who held a number of key Cabinet portfolios in the past.

The sources said that Dr. Hindawi playing a major role in running the internal affairs of the government, Dr. Majali will be mainly handling foreign affairs, especially that the peace process is expected to produce fast and substantive progress.

But despite Dr. Hindawi's strength, the local performance of the Cabinet will depend on the composition of its economic team, observers said.

But apart from the departure of Dr. Fariz, no information was available on what will happen in the portfolios of finance, industry and trade, and planning.

Jordan, Israel to form panel

(Continued from page 1)

makes it difficult to delineate or demarcate borders in that area, according to Mr. Peres' opinion.

In a statement to Jordan Television Dr. Anani added that Mr. Peres' statement might have some positive elements because he accepted the concept and principle of border demarcation, "something that we take positively."

The minister added that technical obstacles facing the demarcation of borders should be left to the Jordanian technical experts who are aware of the reasons of the low sea levels resulting from the over-pumping by the Israeli authorities of water from the River Jordan.

Dr. Anani said the timing of Mr. Peres' statements should not be a reason or a justification for postponing the discussion of this subject or (not adhering) to Jordan's rights in defining its share of the Dead Sea water.

Mr. Peres had said that his country hoped to reach "arrangements" with Jordan at the new session in Washington. But he warned that it would not be easy to draw up a definitive border.

"The Dead Sea is alive and moves all the time," he said. "When you look at a map of the region, you never know where the sea stops and the land begins. So the line of the border with Jordan in the area is difficult to establish."

Jordan announced the new Washington talks over the weekend after a halt since the February mosque massacre by an Israeli settler in Hebron.

Jordanian officials said they were prepared to sign an agreement on the border before scaling a full peace treaty.

North Korea categorically refuses special inspections

VIENNA (Agencies) — North Korea "will never" allow inspections of the two nuclear sites which the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) suspects are used to store nuclear material to make weapons, a North Korean diplomat said here Tuesday.

Hans Blix, director general of the IAEA, told the U.N. Security Council last week in New York that inspection of the two sites at Yongbyon would enable the IAEA to verify whether fuel had been diverted for military purposes.

But North Korean embassy official Yun Ho Jin said: "My delegation cannot but express strong doubt on the technical credibility of some technical officials of the IAEA secretariat."

He was speaking at a press conference during an IAEA board of governors' meeting.

Mr. Yun said the IAEA could measure the 8,000 spent fuel rods which the North Koreans have removed from the nuclear plants to check whether any plutonium had been diverted. The inspection would last "less than several months," he said, contrary to IAEA estimates that the operation would take more than a year.

Mr. Yun said that a year ago leading IAEA officials had said it would be impossible to check the reactor's record without inspecting the two other sites which have not been declared by the North Korean government.

But in May the agency said that if North Korea accepted all the IAEA's proposals concerning the selection and separation of spent fuel rods,

this would suffice to check the reactor's past record.

Mr. Blix told the U.N. Security Council last week that the removal of the fuel rods meant his agency could never determine if plutonium had been diverted.

Mr. Yun justified his nation's attitude saying its "unique special status," gained when Pyongyang reversed a decision to withdraw from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty meant it did not need to apply the inspection clause of the treaty, but only submit to specially negotiated inspections.

However, on Tuesday North Korea reportedly repeated its threat to withdraw from the treaty if the IAEA takes the case to the U.N. Security Council.

"If the IAEA secretariat takes the North Korean nuclear inspection question to the U.N. Security Council and continues to put pressure on us, we will no longer feel tied by the unreasonable demands of the IAEA secretariat and we will have to move onto the next stage of our peaceful nuclear plan," said Pak Yong Nam, director general of North Korea's atomic energy department.

Washington announced last week it would seek international sanctions against North Korea after the IAEA declared that it was no longer possible to determine whether Pyongyang had diverted weapons-grade plutonium from a nuclear facility to a bomb programme.

The five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council — Britain, China,

France, Russia and the United States — met informally Monday to discuss the impasse between the IAEA and North Korea.

At the insistence of China — which opposed an immediate meeting of all 15 members — the other council members will join the effort later this week.

The talks will define the council's intervention in the looming nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula, outline what sanctions could be imposed and settle on an ultimatum to issue to Pyongyang.

In Washington, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Tuesday that the United States would not be intimidated by North Korea's threat to regard any future economic sanctions as an act of war.

"Let me simply say that we will not be intimidated by that kind of talk," he said in an interview from Paris on the NBC "Today" programme. "We need to proceed deliberately and firmly following the policies that we're following, and I think that the North Koreans will then have to make their choice."

Mr. Christopher said he was optimistic that other countries would join the United States in imposing "a very effective sanctions regime" to pressure Pyongyang into allowing international inspections of its nuclear programme.

"That's our present goal we're going to be definite and firm about it," he said in the interview, apparently taped before he learned of North Korea's vow "never" to allow inspection of two suspected nuclear waste sites.

Yemeni ceasefire is shattered

(Continued from page 1)

Al Attas, named as southern prime minister, told reporters the south would "welcome favourably the deployment of international observers to consolidate the ceasefire."

But Mr. Bassandawa swiftly ruled out foreign intervention, "because we are one country."

The president, meanwhile, said on an inspection tour of a military camp that an end to Yemeni unity, declared in May 1990, was out of the question. "Without unity, there is no future," he warned, quoted by SABA news agency.

Rockets streaked over frontlines from multi-barrelled launchers manned by southern troops trying to replace the month-long assault on Aden.

Artillery blasted from southern strongpoints on an arc West, north and northeast of the city in what the southern officers said was a response to northern firing.

Northern shells fell within two kilometres of Aden's main Al Hissa power station on the shore of Bandar Tawahi Bay between Aden and the industrial Little Aden suburb and were also crashing into Bir Nasser area and on a front to the northeast.

Residents said northern shelling had destroyed the water station at Bir Nasser, disrupting water supplies in the city.

The most intense fighting was on the central front directly north of the city. Northern gunners have been shelling the northern districts of the city

from emplacements erected on the central front in the past three days.

Southern soldiers dug in either side of a road littered with shell casings and ammunition boxes said they were shelling northern troops in Sabar, a village which until two days ago they had retaken from an earlier assault by northern troops.

Since the war began on May 4, northern troops have been pushing towards Aden, declared the capital of the southern state which succeeded on May 21, ending four years of north-south unity.

Mr. Sabar, which is 18 to 20 kilometres north of Aden's outskirts, now appears to have fallen to the north again.

"They are liars. They didn't respect the ceasefire," said Colonel Ali Mohammad Azabi on the outskirts of Bir Nasser, referring to the ceasefire the Sanaa government said it would implement.

"From 12 until five it was quiet. And then at five a.m. they started with artillery. They tried to advance and they failed."

Residents of Aden have been quick to stock up on water drawn from wells and buy basic foods like bread, rice and sugar. Piped water appears to have been stopped in much of the city and telephones work only erratically.

"We will never surrender. We would rather die," said Hussein Ahmad Ali, brandishing an assault rifle near

Mr. Azabi's position.

Near the northeastern front about 25 kilometres along the coast road towards Zinjibar, Colonel Ali Miftah, said Defence Minister Hatham Qassem Taber ordered him to stop firing by midnight (2100 GMT).

"But he said if they are fighting you, you must act. We stopped everything, but what can we do if they fight us?" he said at a heavily fortified strongpoint on the scorching semi-desert Aden cape flats beside the Indian Ocean.

On Monday, the United States welcomed the reports of a ceasefire in Yemen and urged the two sides to resume dialogue as soon as possible.

Washington had received a report of a ceasefire, and "if it is true we welcome it and hope that both sides would implement it fully," State Department spokeswoman Christine Shelly told reporters.

Ms. Shelly said that the United States supported the unity of Yemen but "we believe that unity and reconciliation cannot be based on military force."

"We continue to call on both parties to halt the fighting immediately and to agree to resume their political dialogue."

Before the ceasefire announcement the State Department issued a statement welcoming Saturday's Gulf Cooperation Council expression of support for the U.N. Security Council resolution, and saying that Washington "looks to the GCC to continue its positive role in the Yemen crisis."

Hebron observers pull back

(Continued from page 10)

crossed, the leadership in Tunis is opening the gates of faith," said the leaflet, using the religious term in Arabic for fratricide.

The leaflet accused police commander Yousef of provoking fighting among Palestinians "by insisting on hunting our holy fighters."

Gen. Yousef has said repeatedly that the police will no longer tolerate the killings of suspected informants and demanded that Hamas hand over the men responsible for two such deaths May 27. Hamas claimed responsibility in an earlier leaflet.

Over 800 such killings occurred after the uprising against the Israeli occupation started in December 1987. But human rights investigators said many involved settling personal or clan disputes.

Suspected Palestinian policemen shot and wounded five bystanders in Gaza City when they failed to hit a fleeing car, witnesses said.

Two men were shot in the abdomen and three others were lightly hurt when four people opened fire with Kalashnikov rifles on the vehicle.

One of the wounded, who refused to be named, said the four had halted a Palestinian driving a brand new car believed to be stolen.

"They appeared to be policemen in civilian dress," the 40-year-old witness said. "The driver refused to get out and drove off fast. They shot at him but missed and he got away."

Palestinian police could not be contacted immediately.

The Israeli army has banned Jewish settlers from praying at the site of a 6th century synagogue in Gaza City for "security reasons."

Dania Hershkovich, spokeswoman for the Gush Katif settlement, said a written request to pray had been in accordance with the May 4 Cairo agreement for autonomy under which the Palestinian authority guarantees free access to all religious sites.

General Dov Gazit, head of an Israeli-Palestinian liaison committee, replied that the army had declared the autonomous area of Gaza out of bounds to Israelis.

Ms. Hershkovich said that in recent years religious settlers had always been able to pray at

the ruined synagogue in line with tradition on the first of each month in the Hebrew calendar — the first of Tamuz falls Thursday.

The site, with a mosaic of King David playing the lute, was discovered on the seafloor in 1967 after Israel seized Gaza.

Palestinians said the settlers only visited the site about two or three times a year.

A synagogue at Jericho, the other autonomous area, has been the scene of repeated trouble as hardline Jews have turned up to pray with guns.

The European Union said on Tuesday it had granted 2.4 million European currency units (\$2.8 million) in humanitarian medical aid for Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank.

The aid will go to supplying medical equipment for clinics and hospitals in both the private and public sector, the European Commission said in a statement.

A statement, which will cover six months, will also help provide technical assistance and an improvement in a quality control system for medicines produced locally, the commission said.

PLO warns donors against humiliating it

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), about to present a revised budget to donors, desperately needs money to pay for self-rule but will not accept "humiliating" conditions, a senior Palestinian development official said on Tuesday.

Funding, not security, is now the chief problem facing Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho. A virtually bankrupt PLO will ask donors at a crucial conference in Paris this week for at least \$70 million to cover a growing budget deficit.

Palestinian officials have repeatedly stressed in recent weeks how badly they need the money, not least to pay 3,000 Palestinian policemen sleeping rough and living off generosity. Now it seems they are losing patience.

"What is humiliating is to start the process (with donors) treating the Palestinians as suspect. In any court in the world, you are innocent until proven guilty. For us, it seems the

rules of the game have been flipped around," Hassan Abu Libdeh, deputy managing director of the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction, told a news conference.

"We are ready to meet international standards of transparency. We are not willing, however, to be pushed around to get pennies here and there," he added.

Western diplomats privately say their governments are concerned the PLO, weaned on Gulf Arab money they could use as they liked, has a history of missing funds. At the same time, half a dozen Western states have been involved in unannounced talks directly with the PLO over projects and donations.

The budget of the self-rule administration, unpopular for donors who like to put money into tangible development projects, is the most important issue at the Paris conference.

Mr. Abu Libdeh said donors have pledged \$100 million for

the operating budget, excluding projects, and the PLO now needs at least another \$70 million because self-rule has been slower than expected getting started and as a result the authority cannot collect taxes or other revenues.

"The deficit became more. Taxes are expected to fill the gap. If not, a collapse of the central authority will happen eventually. We are going through an extremely critical phase," he said.

Donor countries have told the PLO they will pay the money they pledged when Palestinian self-rule institutions are up and running. But PLO officials reply they need money to get the institutions up and running.

The Paris meeting, organised by the World Bank, is the fourth major donors' conference since the PLO and Israel sealed a peace deal last year. The others produced pledges of \$2.4 billion for five years of budgeting and projects, including \$720 million in

the first year, but no hard cash. The Palestinian aid programme, starting from scratch with dozens of bilateral donors, is even more complex than most.

Development agencies have done little to explain the multi-stage process between pledge and implementation and it is unclear how much delays are due to donors' political reservations and how much to ordinary bureaucratic procedures.

One example of humiliating conditions, Mr. Abu Libdeh said, was a demand by donors to check every month cheques signed on projects they were funding to ensure the signatures of Palestinian aid officials were genuine.

Along with the budget, Mr. Abu Libdeh said the PLO and donors would discuss projects in a technical assistance programme and an emergency rehabilitation programme worked out with the World Bank, totalling together over \$160 million.

Hostilities renewed in South Lebanon

MARIJAYOUN, Lebanon (Agencies) — Resistance forces clashed in artillery battles with Israeli troops and allied militiamen in South Lebanon Tuesday, security sources said.

They said the hostilities erupted at 9:30 a.m. (0630 GMT) when Hizbollah guerrillas fired rocket-propelled grenades and mortar shells on Israel's surrogate South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia in southeast Lebanon.

Sources, who requested anonymity, reported no casualties from the stricken SLA position of Dallafeh in the eastern sector of a border enclave Israel occupied in South Lebanon.

Israeli troops and SLA militiamen struck back with 155-millimetre howitzers on guerrilla hideouts in olive groves facing Dallafeh in the western sector of the Bekaa Valley.

The hostilities remained within the normal rules and boundaries of the game, marking a sharp deescalation from last week's air assaults and cross-border missile strikes

that threatened the Middle East peace process.

That spasm of violence was touched off by Israel's deadliest air raid in 10 months in which up to 50 people were killed at a Hizbollah training base near the Syrian border in East Lebanon.

Hizbollah responded with massive Katyusha rocket barrages on northern Israel.

Syria, Lebanon's main power broker, and Iran, Hizbollah's patron, have used their influence to ease the tension. Hizbollah stopped missile

attacks since Friday.

The United States has been urging all Middle Eastern parties involved to exercise restraint and avert threats to the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Lebanon protested to the United Nations branding Israeli actions of piracy that violated its sovereignty and calling for an emergency meeting of the Security Council.

But U.S. opposition defeated a draft council resolution on Monday condemning the Israeli raid.

Nabulsi says economy is performing well

(Continued from page 1)

tranche of \$14 million, he said. However, the delays in implementing the corrective measures were also delaying further payments.

"It is not simply a matter of consumption," he said. "We have to adopt major measures in the water and energy sectors in terms of realistic tariffs."

In the banking sector, the CBJ was switching to "indirect controls" rather than direct measures such as ceilings on credit facilities and restrictions on the activities of commercial banks. The objective, Dr. Nabulsi said, is to influence the policies and decisions of commercial banks in a manner that would serve the economy and ensure the best utilisation of available resources.

So far this year, commercial banks have remained within the indirect limitations of credit facilities that the CBJ is forced to adopt as recommended by the IMF. It was the first time in several years that the limits were respected and adhered to, avoiding problems for the authorities to regulate the situation.

Developed countries use

securities and bonds as a tool to control excess liquidity and inflation, Dr. Nabulsi pointed out, adding that Jordan adopted the certificates of deposit system eight months before it was supposed to have started it under the IMF programme.

The relative slump in the Amman Financial Market (AFM) cannot be taken as an indicator of the economy's performance since individuals and institutions motivated by speculative interests are the main players in the bourse, Dr. Nabulsi noted, adding that the stock market cannot be seen as a productive sector contributing to national growth.

The CBJ had no direct role to play in the AFM except perhaps controlling the involvement of commercial banks and financial institutions in portfolios.

At the same time, Dr. Nabulsi noted that the decline at the AFM was around four to five per cent since the beginning of the year and described it as insignificant compared with the 30 per cent drop posted in the Tel Aviv exchange and the general recession in other stock markets

around the world.

The CBJ will continue to maintain restrictions on transfers in order to prevent capital flight, but does not plan any additional regulations, the governor said. Such regulations only apply to residents, he added.

Jordan is prepared to face any eventuality resulting from possible negative economic and monetary measures adopted by the Palestinian self-rule authority, including the possible issuance of a Palestinian currency, he said.

The logic in the situation is that any such measure will affect both Jordanians and Palestinians on both sides of the river, and, as such, it is unlikely that Jordan would face any serious problems, whether in terms of capital flight or even the possible dumping of the Jordanian dinar, Dr. Nabulsi said.

"It is not a zero-sum game," where one will lose everything to the benefit of the other, he said, noting that a majority of the Palestinians in the occupied territories would use the dinar in all their internal official dealings, including salaries and taxes, he said.

have started operating in the occupied lands after a 27-year hiatus and this offers the CBJ direct monitoring of the situation there.

Commercial institutions may transfer Jordanian money to the occupied territories as economic development of the area picks up momentum, but the presence of the Jordanian banks is the best means for the CBJ to exercise its options to defend the Kingdom's monetary system, he added.

In any event, "we are well prepared to deal with any eventuality," he said.

The CBJ governor said between JD 350 and JD 400 million remain in circulation in the occupied territories.

There are many solutions to the issue and the best is an integration of the Jordanian and Palestinian currencies as and when the Palestinians issue their own tender, Dr. Nabulsi said.

In the meantime, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) has agreed that the self-rule authority in the occupied territories would use the dinar in all their internal official dealings, including salaries and taxes, he said.

Rwandan rebels try to block government counter-offensive

KIGALI (R) — Heavy mortar battles thundered around the Rwandan capital Tuesday as rebels tried to block a two-day government army counter-offensive.

U.N. officials said fighting was concentrated around Kigali city centre's Meridien Roundabout and Mount Kigali, the highest peak still held by the army despite the rebels gaining a foothold there days ago.

Heavy guns and anti-aircraft fire, much of it pure intimidation, boomed across the largely-deserted city.

The more strategic battles appeared to be south and north of the capital with government troops clearly determined to limit gains of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) rebels.

The RPF has gained the upper hand in Kigali in two months of renewed civil war ignited by the assassination of President Juvenal Habyarimana on April 6. Massacres largely blamed on his fellow-Hutu Tribesmen, have taken an estimated 500,000 lives, most of the victims minority Tutsis.

U.N. officials said there was heavy fighting in a village near the southern town of Kabagayi, captured by rebels last week. The fall of Kabagayi threatened the nearby government base of Gitarama 40 miles (25 km) south of Kigali. Hundreds of thousands of people from the majority Hutu tribe have sheltered there, fearing the advance of the mainly Tutsi RPF.

Government forces had also pushed down from the northern garrison town of Ruhengeri in an attempt to force the RPF off two strongholds it holds on the road to Kigali, they added.

The rebels seem to have contained the government push, the U.N. officials added.

"The military situation has not really changed. The initiative is still with the RPF de-

spite government claims of success," one U.N. official told Reuters.

The officials said the RPF was still some three kilometres south of the town of Gitarama, where Rwanda's interim government fled last month.

UNAMIR military spokesman Major Jean-Guy Plante said government forces launched a counter-attack Saturday night and were concentrating on repulsing RPF rebels from the main route south of Kigali.

But speaking in the rebel-held town of Kabuga 16 kilometres east of Kigali, RPF military commander Major-General Paul Kagame said government counter-attacks had been repulsed and the RPF still held on its positions.

He said rebel forces were still surrounding Gitarama from many directions but declined to say whether the RPF wanted to seize it before Kigali, saying: "That remains my secret."

In a surprising development, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, widely regarded to be the RPF's main backer, angrily censured them for refusing to accept a ceasefire.

In his first public attack on the RPF, Mr. Museveni told a news conference Monday night the rebels were being unrealistic because they did not have the capacity to win the civil war.

"I have advised them time and again to agree to a ceasefire since the international community has promised a tribunal to try those responsible for the genocide and I do not understand why they insist on fighting," Mr. Museveni said.

"They are making a mistake by continuing to fight. They do not have the equipment to win a quick war," he added.

The RPF also faced criticism from a human rights group.

Human Rights Watch/



Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) members carry weapons and ammunition on the Gitarama front-line near Nyanza (AFP)

Africa, in a letter to Mr. Kagame, cited several incidents of alleged abuses by RPF soldiers. In one incident last week international television networks showed news video of a young rebel officer shooting dead at close range wounded government soldiers who had surrendered.

The letter also cited the killing recently of a missionary named Father Joachim Vall-majo in the northern rebel-

held town of Byumba. Other Catholic sources have also reported that the RPF killed two priests at a village called Nyanawimana.

"Human Rights Watch/Africa demands that you assure complete protection to all the peoples within zones controlled by the RPF, including those who are trying to leave these zones to take refuge elsewhere," the letter said.

Mandela has not checked on 'niece' in N. Zealand

PRETORIA (R) — South Africa's President Nelson Mandela has not checked whether a woman claimed to be his niece and under investigation by New Zealand police was related to him, his spokesman Joel Netshitenzhe said Tuesday.

"The president has not investigated the veracity of the story and wouldn't want to comment on it," he told Reuters.

New Zealand police said Tuesday they had received allegations of criminal activity against Nomaza Paintin, who has said she is Mr. Mandela's niece. The head of Wellington's Criminal Investigation Bureau also hinted that he was probing Ms. Paintin's fund-raising activities.

Ms. Paintin, a Wellington resident, won worldwide publicity in April when she cast her ballot in New Zealand — 10 hours ahead of South Africa — and became the first black person to vote in historic all-race elections in which Mr. Mandela and his African National Congress won a sweeping victory.

Sources close to Mr. Mande-

la said given the African "extended family", under which dozens of people can claim family ties through clans and tribal association, Ms. Paintin could be related to Mandela.

"He (Mandela) took it all in good faith," a source said. A New Zealand Television programme at the weekend interviewed Ms. Paintin's mother, who said her daughter was born in Zimbabwe, not South Africa, and was Mr. Mandela's second cousin, not his niece.

New Zealand Television disputed further statements by Ms. Paintin that she was a qualified doctor and had headed a World Health Organisation immunisation programme in Mozambique.

Ms. Paintin, complaining of exhaustion, told Reuters Monday: "At the moment I'm not in a position to say anything. I've always conducted myself with dignity, and I intend to keep it that way."

Asked if she still maintained she was Mr. Mandela's niece, Ms. Paintin replied: "You will hear everything in good time. Just be patient."

Russia pressures Caucasus republics on arms agreement

BRUSSELS (R) — Russia is pressing former Soviet republics in the troubled Caucasus to renegotiate an arms share-out deal and allow Moscow to deploy hundreds of extra tanks and other equipment close to their borders, NATO sources say.

Russia is worried by the conflicts lapping at its southern borders but has failed to win NATO agreement for any changes in a landmark European arms treaty, signed in 1990, that would allow Moscow to go beyond equipment limits set for the region.

After the Soviet Union collapsed, the republics agreed a separate deal among themselves on how to share out the limits for tanks, armoured vehicles and other hardware covered by the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty.

Alliance sources and diplomats said Russia was asking Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan to change that separate agreement so that Moscow could take a bigger share, while at the same time avoiding any violation of the terms of the CFE agreement.

"The Russians see it as a way out of their problems, since they can't get agreement from NATO and the other parties to renegotiate the treaty," said one alliance source, who asked not to be identified.

Russia says the treaty, which provides for sweeping cuts in military hardware from the Atlantic to the Urals, no longer reflects the security situation in Europe and that it should be changed. It involves all NATO and former Warsaw Pact states.

Moscow, which wants to station more tanks and armoured vehicles in the Caucasus region than the treaty allows, has complained that the West is ignoring its concerns.

Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev may raise the issue again at a meeting with NATO foreign ministers in Istanbul Friday.

But diplomats said the move to pressure republics in the Caucasus raised sensitive questions about Russian intentions towards its neighbours and the balance of military power.

"There is an issue here of how much pressure Moscow can bring to bear on its neighbours, many of whom are fragile and locked in conflict," said one diplomat.

While some NATO allies would be happy to see such an arrangement — because it would avoid any violation of the CFE treaty — others are concerned that Moscow is pushing too hard.

Turkey, close to the Caucasus, is particularly worried about Moscow's attitude, diplomats and officials said.

"If there is an agreement

Bosnia rivals talk truce, fight in north

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnian rivals Tuesday held a second day of difficult talks on a proposed ceasefire as Muslim-led troops clashed with Serb forces on northern battlefronts.

Bosnian Serb leaders and a Muslim-Croat delegation sat down for a second meeting in Geneva to discuss a general ceasefire for Bosnia but the two sides still disagreed over how long the proposed truce should last.

U.N. officials and Serb delegates said the talks might end later Tuesday and resume at Sarajevo Airport later this week.

With Serbs pushing for a year-long ceasefire and Muslim-Croat allies calling for a four-week truce, U.N. special envoy Yasushi Akashi said he expected the talks to be "very hard".

Muslim-led Bosnian army forces made some gains around Mount Ozren in northern Bosnia near Vozuce, 50 kilometres southwest of Doboj, a Bosnian Serb officer told Reuters Monday.

Heavily armed Bosnian Serb soldiers in the area moved to reinforce Vozuce Monday and hit Bosnian army positions with anti-aircraft fire.

Muslim-controlled Sarajevo Radio confirmed fighting in the area, which appears to centre on controlling a supply route linking the Muslim stronghold of Tuzla to the central

town of Zavidovici. A U.N. spokesman in Sarajevo said both sides exchanged shell and mortar fire in northern Bosnia Monday, with 1,143 detonations reported around Ribnica, south-west of Tuzla.

Sarajevo Radio said Serb forces launched artillery and tank attacks on Gradacac, north of Tuzla, Tuesday, with more than 30 shells hitting the town. The United Nations could not immediately confirm the report.

The town is located along the vital supply corridor that links Serb-held territory in Bosnia and Croatia to Serbia.

In Geneva, Mr. Akashi presented his own draft ceasefire accord in separate meetings with both sides Monday.

The draft, which he later revised, proposed an initial four-month ceasefire during which a final political settlement would be reached. The ceasefire would be enforced by about 5,000 extra U.N. peacekeepers deployed along front lines.

In a counter-proposal, Muslims and Croats instead suggested a four-week truce which could only be extended if progress was made in political negotiations on the future ethnic partition of the former Yugoslav republic.

Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, meanwhile, proposed a year-long truce, Serb delegates

said. "There are some significant differences which still have to be bridged. It will be very hard, we will be negotiating throughout today," Mr. Akashi told Reuters.

Bosnian Muslims and Croats are represented in Geneva by Bosnian Vice-President Ejup Ganic and by Croat leader Kresimir Zubak, president of a new Muslim-Croat Federation in which Mr. Ganic also holds the post of vice-president.

Muslim and Croat delegates have argued against any lengthy ceasefire because they say it would lock in Serb military gains and remove pressure on the Serbs to give up land in territorial negotiations mediated by major powers.

The Serbs, who control 70 per cent of Bosnia and have forced hundreds of thousands of non-Serbs from their homes, have been pressing for an open-ended truce.

Bosnian Serb representative Alaksa Buha said Tuesday that the ceasefire talks would likely move on to Sarajevo Airport, Yugoslav state Tanjug news agency reported.

Diplomats in Geneva said that idea was gaining ground, if only because neither Muslim nor Croat military commanders were taking part in the talks and Serbs would refuse to sign any agreement without them present.

China crash heightens aviation woes

BEIJING (R) — China's worst air crash and yet another hijacking to Taiwan likely will etch June 6 as a humiliating day in the minds of embattled aviation and tourism officials — and jittery air travelers.

The events of the day brought China face-to-face with the costly side-effects of its ill-regulated, breakneck airline growth.

Early Monday, less than 12 hours after the official Xinhua News Agency trumpeted China's lease of five more Soviet-era Tupolev-154 jetliners from Russia, a TU-154 exploded in mid-air and crashed outside Xian, a major tourism centre in west-central China.

All 160 people on China Northwest Flight 2303 died, including a family of four from Italy, two Britons, two Americans and a Swiss.

Also killed were three Hong Kong residents, one Taiwanese, 133 mainland passengers and 14 crew, making it the deadliest crash reported in the history of Chinese civil aviation.

Wing vibration may have triggered the catastrophic crash of the Tupolev-154, the official Xinhua News Agency said Tuesday.

However, according to Chinese aviation sources, the accident may have been caused by the failure of the automatic pilot, causing the plane to lose altitude too rapidly.

The Xinhua correspondent in Xian said the pilot had indicated vibrations in the wings a few minutes before the crash.

An airline spokesman, speaking from Xian, empha-

sized that the pilot "had not committed any mistake" in Monday's crash.

The English-language official newspaper China Daily, meanwhile, reported that three eyewitnesses said they heard "two loud explosions in the clouds and then saw a fireball crashing to the ground."

A spokesman for the government of Shaanxi province said the two explosions were caused by the "breakup of the flight deck" but denied there had been a fire.

"The aircraft debris and bodies recovered on the ground bore no scorch marks," he said.

The day's second blow — the hijacking of a Chinese airliner to arch-rival Taiwan from coastal Fujian — came as confused reports of the crash were still trickling in.

Strong quake rattles Colombia; 2 killed

BOGOTA (R) — A strong earthquake rattled central and southwestern Colombia Monday, killing two people, injuring at least 30 others and leaving dozens more homeless.

The government's Geological Institute Ingominas said the tremor registered 6.0 on the Richter Scale and was centred in the small town of Toribio in the southwestern province of Cauca, more than 200 kilometres southwest of Bogota.

The tremor, which occurred at 3:47 p.m. (4:47 p.m. edt) (2047 GMT) and lasted about 40 seconds, was felt along the country's two central mountain ranges in central provinces like Cundinamarca where the capital of six million people is located.

The U.S. Geological Survey in Golden, Colorado, said the

quake had registered a preliminary magnitude of 6.4 on the Richter Scale.

The tremor hit hardest small towns in Cauca and neighbouring Huila province, damaging houses, churches and other buildings, many of which later collapsed.

The Colprens News Agency reported one person dead of a heart attack in Bogota and another crushed under the rubble of his collapsed home in Pitalito in Huila.

Local television news footage showed people rummaging in their demolished homes and others carefully stepping over huge, twisting cracks in the earth.

A Red Cross official told Reuters an avalanche of water and mud roared down Paez River east of Toribio to flood Belalcazar and other small towns along the river's banks

moments after rescue workers evacuated residents from the mountainous area.

The official said the river had burst through a natural dam created by a mud and rock slide caused earlier by the quake.

The head of a local emergency committee told local television that they feared a possible eruption of the Nevado Del Huila volcano further north. "A strong explosion was heard from the volcano at about the same time the quake occurred," he said.

But an Ingominas official later told Reuters the institute's monitors near the Volcano hadn't picked up anything out of the ordinary.

"We haven't registered anything," he said. "The explosion could have come from one of the avalanches in the area."

Shanghai to build China's biggest opera house

SHANGHAI (R) — A French architect has beaten 13 competitors to win the contract to build China's largest Western opera house in Shanghai, a French diplomat said Tuesday.

He said Jean Marie Charpentier has been chosen to construct the opera house, costing \$60 million and seating 2,000. Work is due to begin in October and be completed after two years. Architects from Japan, the United States, Canada, Australia and China also submitted designs for the building, which will be devoted solely to Western opera, he said. Its site is one of the best in the city — in the People's Park, next to the new office of the city government now under construction.

Tuesday's Liberation Daily said the building will have many lights and at night will resemble a Crystal Palace, the newspaper said. "This is a prestige project and has much to do with the political strategy of the city government of Shanghai," one Western diplomat said. "It wants to have not only Hong Kong and Taiwan singers performing here but also high culture, such as Western opera and classical music," he added.

Bank blast sends Canadian dollar sky high

TORONTO (R) — Pyjama-clad residents of a quiet Canadian village scrambled for cash that was sent scattering by an explosion in a bank night early Monday, police said. The blast sent dozens of villagers in Coldwater, about 75 miles (120 kms) northwest of Toronto, into the streets where they snatched their pockets with stuff before the area was cordoned off by police, but they got less than they bargained for, said constable Doug Langlois.

"There were bricks and money strewn all around the street ... but the condition of the money was not very good. A lot of it was all torn up some of it burned," Mr. Langlois said. Villagers returned the damaged dollars, police said. One person is being investigated for looting and may face charges, Langlois told Reuters. "It's quite possible it was a bomb," was set off the bank's safe, Langlois said adding the investigation was continuing. Police do not know exactly how much money was in safe at the time of the blast, but estimated it was probably several thousand dollars.

Rock singer sentenced for brandishing gun

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — Rock Singer Grace Slick was given a suspended jail sentence and ordered to undergo an alcohol rehabilitation programme Monday for brandishing a shotgun at police officers.

Slick, former lead singer of the Jefferson Airplane, looked apprehensive as Marin County Superior Court Judge William Stephens read her sentence in a courtroom in San Rafael, 10 miles north of San Francisco. Judge Stephens gave Slick, 54, a six-month suspended jail term and ordered her to attend an outpatient alcohol rehabilitation programme. As part of a plea agreement reached with prosecutors, Slick was also ordered to perform 200 hours of community service, undergo counselling and attend four alcoholics anonymous meetings a week for 90 days.

Slick was arrested on March 5 when police went to her home in Tiburon, a wealthy community close to San Francisco, after receiving an emergency call from a man in her home who said that a drunken woman was firing a shotgun.

Bare-breasted bandits caught in the act

DEVENTER, Netherlands (AP) — Six bare-breasted bandits suspected of robbing Dutch supermarkets, armed with nothing but their nudity, have been caught in the act, police said. In a string of robberies, a group of women rushed into supermarkets, stunning customers and management with a striptease while accomplices rifled the cash drawer. But the bandits met their match. "When I saw them coming in and starting to show their breasts, I immediately pushed the alarm button," said Albert Goorman, a supermarket owner in the eastern Dutch city Deventer. "I knew what was happening. While the women stripped down to their panties, and customers gaped, a male accomplice apparently hit the office and escaped with 5,000 guilders (\$2,717). Goorman said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

S. Africa creates Truth Commission

CAPE TOWN (AFP) — Justice Minister Dullah Omar Tuesday announced the creation of a Truth Commission to investigate past human rights violations by all political groups in South Africa. Mr. Omar told a press conference here that the commission would enable the country to "come to terms with its past." The commission could also set up a specialised structure to deal with all applications for political amnesty, he added. "Gross violations of human rights must be fully and officially investigated with due regard to fair procedures," Mr. Omar said. "The identity of the victims and what happened to them, and the identity of the perpetrators, must be made known." The commission should consist of eminent South Africans, he added. Numerous political killings carried out by white extremists and black radicals during 45 years of apartheid rule in South Africa, which ended with the historic all-race elections in April, remain unsolved.

Troops mop up Filipino rebel base

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (R) — Philippine Marines pursued remnants of a Muslim fundamentalist guerrilla group on southern Jolo Island Tuesday after killing 40 rebels in four days of fighting, the military said. "We are pursuing them and the Marines are conducting mopping-up operations," said Major Pedro Soria, civil-relations chief of the military's Southern Command. A search was also launched for Abdurajak Janjalani, the leader of the fundamentalist Abu Sayyaf guerrilla group, which has been blamed for a spate of kidnappings and bombings in the southern islands over the past year. "There is a strong possibility that Janjalani may have been taken hostage by the family of his number two commander, who may be interested in claiming the money bounty of 1.5 million pesos (\$35,500) for his capture," Soria said. He declined to elaborate.

Remains of 16 U.S. MIAs sent home

HANOI (AFP) — U.S. military Tuesday sent home the suspected remains of 16 men who died during the war here in the largest repatriation since the United States and Vietnam began joint searches for those still missing in action. In the third repatriation ceremony this year, 16 small wooden boxes were loaded into larger aluminium cases and carried aboard a Starliner military jet parked at Hanoi's Noi Bai Airport. As an honour, guard saluted each case as it was loaded onto the plane. Vietnamese MIG jets noisily practised landings and takeoffs on the runway at Noi Bai, which also serves as an air force base. The remains were recovered during the 29th joint mission between the U.S. military and Vietnamese authorities to account for the 2,231 American servicemen still missing from the conflict in Indochina. Four sets were handed over by Vietnamese who had found them and reported to local authorities while the others came from excavation of crash sites and graves.

Bangladeshi writer remains at large

DHAKA (AFP) — Feminist writer Taslima Nasreen, who is wanted by police for "outraging the religious feelings of Muslims," was given her first local show of support Tuesday by young Bangladeshi cultural activists. In separate statements, the Charan Shilpi Goshit, Progoti Lekhak Shilpi Goshit, two groups promoting music and literary activities, and the Alternating Film Movement (AFM) protested the criminal arrest warrant for Ms. Nasreen and said it was against the fundamental human rights enshrined in the country's constitution. "It is every man's fundamental right to express himself and we should protest that law which goes against it," said Morshedul Islam of AFM in a published statement. The other groups alleged that the government had bowed to pressure from Islamic fundamentalists, and warned that Muslim extremists were becoming increasingly active throughout Bangladesh. Village clerics reportedly have been issuing illegal judgements in family courts in the name of Islam and Ms. Nasreen had spoken out against them. Ms. Nasreen, a 32-year-old doctor-turned-writer, faces arrest for the "deliberate and malicious intention of outraging the religious feelings of Muslims" for reported remarks she made about the Koran, Islam's most holy book.

كندا في ١١

NEWS IN BRIEF

Inquiry launched after yachting tragedy

AUCKLAND (AFP) — Three people are missing feared dead after a fierce tropical storm swept through a yacht race resulting in 12 yachts being abandoned, authorities said here Tuesday. A formal marine inquiry will be held into the event, the annual Auckland to Tonga race. National Rescue Coordination Centre spokesman Paul Harrison said Tuesday an intensive search was underway for the 12-metre (40-foot) New Zealand sloop Quatermaster with three people aboard. It was last heard from at 2:00 a.m. Sunday (1400 Saturday GMT) as they were caught in the storm. A partially-inflated life raft has since been found but there is no sign of the yacht or crew. Harrison said a Norwegian bulk carrier Nomadic Duchess Tuesday rescued five people from another yacht, Walkiwi 2. They included two Britons, Merry Bigden and Shirley Bigden.

Wendlinger goes home to Austria

NICE (AFP) — Karl Wendlinger, who fell into a coma after crashing in practice for the Monaco Grand Prix, returned to Austria Monday after three weeks in a Nice hospital. Professor Dominique Grimaud of Nice's Saint-Roch Hospital said Wendlinger would recuperate better with his family and friends in Innsbruck. But Grimaud did not say how long or whether Wendlinger would make a full recovery.

International ski congress opens

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — The 39th International Ski Congress opened Monday with delegates from 64 member countries and a total of 130 nations represented for the week-long meeting. The main order of business involves setting the calendars for the upcoming World Cup seasons and designating the sites for upcoming world championships. Other items on the agenda include whether to absorb snowboarding into the international federation and push for its inclusion as an event at the 1998 Winter Games in Nagano, Japan. The federation will also be electing officers before adjourning Sunday.

Paper: Bullets, Cap set for new arena

WASHINGTON (R) — The NBA Bullets and the NHL Capitals are headed for a new \$150 million arena in downtown Washington, the Washington Post reported Tuesday. It said unnamed Washington business leaders and the teams' owner, Abe Pollin, have worked out final details of a plan to put a glass-fronted, 21,000-seat arena on a city-owned site near a downtown metro subway stop. The two teams now play in the 20-year-old USAir arena in suburban Landover, Maryland, and Pollin has held talks with Maryland officials about building a new arena nearby. USAir arena is also used for Georgetown University basketball games, rock concerts, inaugural balls and other events.

Zelezny tops the bill

REIMS (AFP) — World and Olympic javelin champion Jan Zeleny heads the cast for Wednesday's international athletics meeting here. Over the last few seasons, the rise of Czech Zeleny, who holds the world record with a throw of 95.66m, has coincided with knee problems in Britain's former record holder and 1990 European champion Steve Backley.

'Ugly' Knicks face Rockets in finals

NEW YORK (R) — The New York Knicks, survivors of two gruelling seven-game playoff series, are proudly ugly. The Houston Rockets, well-rested after some quality beach time, say they can do ugly, too.

There are more similarities than differences between the two teams in the best-of-seven NBA finals starting in Houston Wednesday.

Both are led by seven-foot (2.13 metre), 31-year-old superstar centres — Nigerian Hakeem "the Dream" Olajuwon for Houston and Jamaican-born Patrick Ewing for New York.

Both teams emphasise defence and they both try to play an inside-outside game between their centres and some streaky outside shooters.

The main difference is style. "We do it ugly," said New York guard John Starks, one of the stars of the Knicks' seventh-game squeaker over the Indiana Pacers to win the Eastern Conference title.

The Knicks grind it out, clog the court, wear the opposition down. They miss shots, throw the ball away, but make up for it with tenacious rebounding and defence. They never win a game by 20 points, or a playoff series four games to none.

"Maybe that's the way it has to be for this team," Knicks coach Pat Riley has said. "It's always been tough, it's always been harrowing."

It also took New York seven games to get past their playoff nemesis of previous years, the three-time defending champion but newly Michael Jordan-less Chicago Bulls.

"If we ever swept anybody or won 4-1, it wouldn't be our style," said rugged forward Anthony Mason. "We don't want it easy. We thrive on danger."

Houston coach Rudy Tomjanovich gave his players some time off to go to the beach in Galveston, Texas, after they dismissed the Utah Jazz in five games to win the Western Conference title last Wednesday.

The Rockets had a full week to wait for the finals. But Tomjanovich says his team has had some of those "ugly" games, too.

"The teams that are here have to play defence," he said. "Games you're not going to give up anything easy. That's what playoff basketball is all about."

But when Houston's offence is clicking, it's beautiful. Olajuwon, the NBA's most valuable player, has all kinds of unstoppable shots and is a clever passer, both inside and out to the "Rocket-launchers" — his prolific 3-point shooters.

"Dream's going to do his thing on the inside and when all of us on the outside are on all cylinders, it's going to be rough to beat us," said the maddening bomber of them all, Vernon "Mad Max" Maxwell.

Maxwell starts alongside point guard Kenny Smith, who provides steady leadership but relies on "Mad Max" to pump him up. "I have to be a wild and crazy guy on the floor, that's the way he wants me to play," Maxwell said of Smith.

Maxwell's emotions have gotten him in trouble at times, but then New York's guards have had some emotional lapses, too, as well as less reliable outside shooting than Houston's.

Starters Derek Harper and Starks, improving steadily after returning from knee surgery, have lost their tempers on occasion. Harper was suspended two games during the Chicago series for fighting.

But the focus of the series is on the big men. Ewing, while statistically outplayed by Olajuwon in their career matchups, like him is an offensive and defensive superstar.

Rafter, Washington advance at Queen's club

LONDON (AP) — Ninth-seeded Australian Patrick Rafter and no. 10 Malivai Washington of the United States won in straight sets Monday to advance to the second round of the Queen's Club grass-court tournament.

With the top eight seeds, led by world no. 1 Pete Sampras, receiving byes in the second round, it was left to Rafter, ranked 25th in the world, to open centre court play with a 7-6 (7-1), 6-4 victory over Jose Francisco Altur of Spain.

Washington, who has slipped to 33rd in the rankings from a career-high 11th two years ago, downed Marcos Ondruska of South Africa, 7-6 (7-3), 6-0. The American had to save two break points at 5-6 in the first set before winning the tiebreaker, then swept the second set in 26 minutes.

"I think I played very solid and I came through in the tight spots," Washington said. "I was confident today, and that's a big deal in this game. I feel it's just a matter of time before I get the breakthrough to get the results that will put me up there again."

Rafter, who reached the fourth round at the French Open where he lost to eventual champion Sergi Bruguera, said he had trouble adapting to the faster surface at Queen's.

"It takes a few days to get used to the grass after playing in Paris," said Rafter.

French tennis president praises Spanish tennis

PARIS (AP) — Record attendance at the French Open proved tennis was not in a crisis, but new stars are needed to keep the sport out of the doldrums, an organiser of the tournament said Monday.

French Tennis Federation President Christian Bimès said the open, which ended Sunday, helped introduce some potential stars in addition to Mary Pierce and Alberto Berasategui. They each reached the finals before losing.

"There are new names in tennis that showed up such as (Pat) Rafter, (Greg) Rusedski, (Hendrik) Dreekmann... new names, perhaps some new champions for tomorrow," Bimès said.

All three of the players, although unseeded, did well in the tournament. Dreekmann, a German teen-ager, advanced to the quarterfinals.

"It is a rejuvenation for international tennis and a necessity because we need new blood, even if the defeats of Ivan Lendl as well as (Stefan) Edberg in the first round were difficult to take," Bimès said.

Bimès also congratulated Spain for sweeping the singles titles thanks to the efforts of Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and Sergi Bruguera.

"Not since the Australians a long time ago have we seen such a success from one country in a Grand Slam tournament," Bimès said. "Especially this year there were two Spanish players in the women's semifinal... It just shows that the Spanish today are the best players on clay."

French tennis president praises Spanish tennis

Bimès said that the addition of the new, 10,000-seat stadium increased attendance for the two weeks by more than 24,000 fans, upping the total to 351,000.

Finally, Bimès said that he would recommend that the Grand Slam Cup and the ATP world championship be united at the end of the season.

"I proposed that we have a round table discussion," Wimbledon and we are ahead forward me and more," Bimès said.

The Grand Slam Cup has top players based on the qualification of their performances at the four Grand Slam tournaments — Wimbledon and the French, U.S. and Australian opens.

The ATP World Championship bring together the top eight players based on their rankings of the previous 12 months in the tournaments on the ATP tour.

"Today I am putting my energy into this project. I am putting my power of persuasion there," Bimès said. "It is not easy but I am convinced that in a year or two it will happen."

Bimès said that the \$2 million that the Grand Slam Cup offered in prize money to the winner could go toward the development of tennis in places like Asia and Africa.

"The ball is in the court of the presidents of the Grand Slam tournaments," Bimès said.

American flavour and European know-how for World Cup TV

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Television executives hope to blend European football expertise with American style to create a distinctive look for broadcasts of the 1994 World Cup.

Basic coverage of the 52 matches from nine venues will be the responsibility of the European Broadcast Union, which joined a global group of broadcasters in paying \$223.7 million to FIFA for the non-U.S. television rights to the 1990, 1994 and 1998 World Cups.

Manolo Romero, chief executive officer of European Broadcasting Company Sports International (ESL), will direct the coverage.

Romero, a veteran of every World Cup since 1966, wants to give the broadcasts an American flavour, without sacrificing coverage of the flow of action.

"We want to make this look as American as possible," Romero says. "Graphics will be American. The replays will be like what you see on American sports TV."

"We want to produce it the way we think it would be produced in the States," Romero will be counting on experienced production teams from European networks, but he said 90 per cent of the 1,200-strong ESL staff will be American.

"One amazing thing is that we have been able to locate people who know soccer and have followed it," Romero says.

U.S. women footballers lead the world

WASHINGTON (AFP) — A world championship may be a pipe dream for the U.S. men's football team, but for America's women it's an accomplished fact.

The women's team became the only U.S. football team ever to win a global tournament when they took out the inaugural FIFA Women's World Championships in 1991.

And coach Anson Dorrance believes the arrival of the World Cup on American shores will boost the women's game right along with the men's as U.S. fans gain a better understanding of the passions of football.

"What it's going to do is give America a very positive image of the world game," Dorrance said. "In America, unfortunately, the image of the World Cup isn't very vivid."

With little fanfare, the U.S. women stormed through CONCACAF qualifying for the 1991 world championships, outscoring opponents 49-0.

At the finals in China, the United States beat Sweden, Brazil and Japan in the first round, then pounded Taiwan 7-0 in the second round.

They beat Germany 5-2 in the semi-finals, and won the championship match against Norway 2-1.

While the men's squad struggles to gain international respect, the women are leading the way in a worldwide explosion in women's soccer.

"Unlike in the men's game, where we don't have a high level of competition, on the women's side the NCAA (university) tournament has the best teams in the world," Dorrance said.

"So our women get a chance to compete at the highest level, which our men lack. The highest level for men here doesn't compare with the Italian first division or the English Premiership."

The very fact that soccer is not the premier men's sport in the United States may help the women's game, said Shawn Ladda, coach of Columbia University's team.

"That is part of why the U.S. team is so successful," Ladda said. "It's not the macho sport of this country."

In many countries, soccer traditionalists have scoffed at the idea of women playing football.

Southern European nations were particularly resistant to the first big push for women's football in the 1970s.

In England it was not until 1990 that the Schools Football Association was allowed to "actively encourage" football for girls.

"In a lot of cultures, women don't have that freedom," Dorrance said. "We've got a culture that encourages freedom for women that few other nations have. Scandinavia, Norway, and it shows in their teams."

American star forward Michelle Akers-Stahl added: "The American mentality of being number one, of committing to a goal, really enables us to become one of the best teams in the world."

Progress in the women's game is still slow in South America and Africa, but participation is growing.

Italy boasts both professional and semi-professional leagues and Japan's professional league is more than two years old and flourishing.

Sweden's pro league has attracted Akers-Stahl, who hopes a women's league can be formed in the United States.

"We have athletes, we have commitment, we need a support structure," Akers-Stahl said. "We need a league for women to play in."

In the meantime, she hopes to be back with most of her world championship teammates for the 1996 Olympics Games in Atlanta, where women's soccer makes its Olympic debut.

Both Dorrance and Akers-Stahl say an Olympic victory will be the best advertisement women's football can get in the United States.

"Americans don't pay much attention to world championships, but they really respect Olympic gold," Dorrance said.

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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA HIRSCH
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WATCH THE RED FLAG
Both vulnerable. North deals.
NORTH
♠ A K 7 6 5
♥ J 10
♦ A 2
SOUTH
♠ 10 8 4
♥ 9 8 4
♦ Q 8 7 3
♣ 10 6

jack won the trick. That should have been a "red alert" for declarer—the ace and queen of diamonds and hence diamond length were with West. Since the lead gave South five quick tricks outside clubs, only four tricks were needed from that suit.

With the threat to the contract revealed at the very first trick, declarer should have taken a simple precaution in the club suit. Instead, South ignored all signs and briskly cashed the three top clubs. When East turned up with a stopper in the suit, the contract could no longer be made.

South's line of play would have been correct had five club tricks been required for the contract. Since only four would do, declarer could have manipulated the suit, so as to keep East off lead, thereby preventing a diamond coming through the king.

After winning the jack of diamonds, declarer should cash the ace of clubs and continue the suit, simply covering any card East produces. West can win the trick cheaply, but can do declarer no harm and nine tricks are a breeze.

The bidding:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT Pass
2 ♠ Pass 2 NT Pass
3 NT Pass Pass
Opening lead: Seven of clubs.
A red flag is the universal signal of danger ahead. If you ignore the warning and sail blithely along, don't later rail at your fate.
If you want to know how the bidding would have proceeded along old-fashioned Goren lines, just substitute two clubs for South's initial one-club response. However, North-South were employing a modern gadget, One-No-Trump forcing, and by rebidding two no trump, South showed a balanced

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	PHILADELPHIA		PLAZA		CONCORD		AMMOUN THEATRE		Nabil Al Mashini Theatre		AHLAN THEATRE	
	Tom Cruise & Holly Hunter in The Firm Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 9:00		CLASS 1999 '2' Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		CONCORD '1' FX - 2 Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD '2' THE GETAWAY Shows: 12:30, 3:45, 6, 8:15, 10:15		Soon the new play !!!		Today & Everyday Abu Awad in social comedy "PUNCTURED BAG"		is back to you after performing in Canada as of Wednesday, June 15, 1994 in their play: "What a peace?" Performances start at 8:30 p.m.	

Rafsanjani strikes conciliatory note with West and Arabs

TEHRAN (Agencies) — Iran's pragmatic President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani struck a conciliatory note with the West and Arab neighbours on Tuesday, stressing once again that his country had no wish to export its Islamic revolution.

Mr. Rafsanjani, who is under increasing pressure at home for his relatively open policies, also denied that his government had abandoned its economic reform programme.

In a news conference marked by unusually critical questions from the domestic media, Mr. Rafsanjani, who was elected a year ago for a second five-year term with a substantially reduced majority, denied reports of differences with the country's spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

"We have worked and struggled together for 30 years... we are always acting in tandem... coordinating," he said.

"We have debates... (but there was) no major discrepancy in our view," he emphasised.

"We are finally unanimous in our ideas and policies," Mr. Rafsanjani was asked why Iran had not taken any action against Britain, such as cutting diplomatic ties, beyond mutual expulsions of diplomats following Iranian charges that Britain had bugged the Iranian embassy in London.

The question followed several articles in radical and conservative Iranian newspapers demanding a review of ties with Britain.

"We will not benefit from cutting ties with any country,"

he said, noting the presence of Iranian students in Britain and the importance of trade with the country.

He responded in a similar vein to questions about why his government was maintaining trade relations with the United States and had allowed U.S. journalists to visit the country at a time when Washington was maintaining its hostility to the Islamic Republic.

He said that Iran had a policy of no diplomatic relations with only two countries — Israel and the United States.

But he argued that economic relations with the U.S. had never been broken. He explained that the Iranian armed forces for example, would be seriously handicapped if they did not have access to spare parts for the majority of their weapons bought from the United States before the 1979 revolution.

"How would we maintain our Boeings," he said in reference to the U.S.-made fleet of the national carrier Iran Air, also bought before the revolution.

"Are you saying we should not sell oil to the United States," he asked his questioner in a reference to the country's vital oil exports.

Mr. Rafsanjani repeated his statement at a news conference a year ago that relations with Washington could be reconsidered if the United States made a goodwill gesture towards Iran.

He said such a gesture would be the release of Iranian funds frozen in the United States since the 1979 seizure of hos-

tages at the U.S. embassy in Tehran, put by Iran at \$10-\$12 billion but estimated in Washington at some \$4 billion.

"A goodwill gesture would be the release of that money," he said.

"If they act seriously, we will react seriously," he added.

Mr. Rafsanjani confirmed for the first time reports circulating in the region for several years that a deal was done with the United States to help free U.S. hostages in Lebanon.

He said that the then U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar had "told us if you help release the U.S. hostages in Lebanon, they will release your money."

"We have not seen anything," he added.

Mr. Rafsanjani's news conference came three days after Iran marked the fifth anniversary of the death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the Islamic republic's founder.

It was attended by more than 100 foreign and Iranian journalists.

In reply to a question about the alleged bugging of Iran's London embassy which Tehran disclosed in April, he noted:

"This wrong deed by the British has created an atmosphere of insecurity and mistrust in relations, which will have negative consequences. We do not wish to see the existence of such an atmosphere among countries."

Iran broke off relations with Britain in March 1989 following strident British protests at Ayatollah Khomeini's Feb. 14 death sentence on novelist Salman Rushdie, a British citizen, for allegedly blaspheming

Islam. Relations were restored in September 1990, but have remained strained.

Mr. Rafsanjani reiterated Iran's denial of involvement in the assassination of Iranian dissidents abroad. He maintained the killings were "the result of inter-group rivalries."

Disputed islands

Mr. Rafsanjani vowed that Iran would never give up three strategic islands in the Gulf claimed also by the United Arab Emirates, and would deploy all its might to keep them.

Mr. Rafsanjani rejected as "baseless" claims of sovereignty by the UAE over Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb in the southern Gulf.

"We will not give up the islands for any price and use all our power to defend them," he vowed.

"It does not matter who is behind these baseless claims."

The president said Iran had "strong evidence" to prove its sovereignty over the islands which control the vital Hormuz Strait.

He also accused the UAE of "lacking a desire" to directly negotiate with Iran over the islands, and warned that taking the case to international tribunals "will lead nowhere."

Mr. Rafsanjani also repeated his warning of last year that the UAE would have to "pass through a sea of blood" to gain control of the islands.

The dispute over the islands erupted again in 1992, after lying dormant from 1971, when the UAE accused Iran of annexing the Arab part of Abu Musa.



UNABATED WAR: A South Yemeni gunner Tuesday prepares in Bir Nasser, about 15 kilometres north of the southern capital of Aden, for his 150-mm battery during a short break in fighting on the northern frontline. Northern Yemeni troops have advanced on Aden in a snap offensive, killing four people and injuring 40 others (AFP photo).

Nabulsi: No devaluation of dinar, exchange market healthy

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) on Tuesday categorically rejected speculation that a devaluation of the Jordanian dinar was in the offing and said it found the present situation in the currency market in the Kingdom quite vibrant and healthy.

CBJ Governor Mohammad Said Nabulsi, in an informal encounter with the press, also ruled out CBJ intervention in the currency market against complaints that the American dollar was gaining against the dinar.

"There was not a single month since 1973 without a rumour that the dinar was going to be devalued," said Dr. Nabulsi, who served two consecutive terms as CBJ governor between 1973 and 1985. He was reappointed again in 1989.

The speculation and rumours — "crying wolf" — came true in 1989, he noted, referring to the devaluation of the dinar that year.

Dr. Nabulsi compared Jordan with other developing countries and pointed out that the 1989 shift was the first time in decades that the Kingdom had to devalue its currency and that as a result of "external elements" — foreign debts.

"We do not see any reason for any change in the exchange value of the dinar," Dr. Nabulsi affirmed. "For the first time in several decades, the dinar reflects its actual worth. Why should we devalue it?"

Referring to the recent strength of the American dollar in the local market, Dr. Nabulsi said the gain of the greenback was the direct result of developments in the international money market and the CBJ found no reason for intervention.

If anything, he said, the CBJ saw the activities in the local money market as highly satisfactory and the situation in the market afforded the bank the opportunity to see supply and demand forces at work.

The CBJ has its own parameters to set the daily exchange rates for foreign currencies, but the rates quoted by private moneychangers, and banks reflect the actual worth of the dinar, Dr. Nabulsi said.

"A difference of five to 10 fils between the CBJ-set rates and the rates offered by the exchanges is only fair," Dr. Nabulsi said.

However, the CBJ is keeping a close watch to ensure that banks and exchanges do not exploit the situation. "We called in the banks and contacted the moneychangers in the first few days when it appeared

that the dollar was gaining in the market," Dr. Nabulsi said. But letting the banks and moneychangers know of the CBJ views did not amount to intervention, he pointed out.

By international standards, government intervention is justified when the difference between the official and parallel market rates exceeds 10 per cent of the value of the currency, a principle that Jordan has followed since the collapse of the dinar in 1988.

In recent years, rates offered by Jordanian private moneychangers have often dipped below the official rates.

Currency dealers said the rate quoted by exchanges on Tuesday for the dollar was 706-707 fils against the CBJ rate of 700-702 fils. However, the exchanges' offer was better, given the fact that commercial banks which adopt the CBJ rate also charge commission.

"If one goes by the book and deals with the commercial banks and applies the CBJ rate plus the banks' commission, then the dollar costs 708 fils compared to the 707 fils offered by the exchanges," said a dealer.

Tuesday's rates reflected a six-to-eight fils drop in the value of the dollar in mid-May, when the American currency hit a post-1989 high of 712-714 fils.

Clinton assures French leaders of common purpose in Bosnia

PARIS (AP) — Turning from D-Day pageantry to foreign policy, U.S. President Bill Clinton met Tuesday with French leaders pressing for a settlement to the war on Bosnia. "All of us want to bring an end to the fighting," Mr. Clinton said.

He endorsed a U.S. proposal for a renewable four-month ceasefire in the former Yugoslav republic and enlisted Prime Minister Edouard Balladur's support for sanctions against North Korea for denying vital nuclear information to international inspections.

On his first visit to France as president, Mr. Clinton held separate talks with Gaullist leaders Jacques Chirac, the mayor of Paris, and Mr. Balladur. Both want to be the conservative candidates in presidential elections next year.

Mr. Clinton also was to address the French National Assembly and meet with Socialist President Francois Mitterrand, who says he intends to remain in office until his term ends in 1995 despite a battle with cancer.

The speech, which is the highlight of Mr. Clinton's public schedule, marks the first time in 76 years a U.S. president has addressed the French legislature. The last was

Woodrow Wilson who in 1918 became the first U.S. president to cross the Atlantic as president.

Thousands of businessmen, tourists and children lined Mr. Clinton's motorcade route through downtown Paris, straining for a glimpse of the president in his armoured limousine. White-gloved police officers were stationed every 15 metres.

Standing in bright sunshine outside Matignon, the prime minister's elaborate office building, Mr. Clinton said, "We reaffirmed our determination to work together very closely on the question in Bosnia."

He said the first order of business is to support the ceasefire, and he specifically endorsed the proposal advanced by Yasuaki Akashi, the top U.N. official in the Balkans. It calls for a renewable four-month ceasefire, while the Bosnian government wants one of no more than four weeks.

The Muslim-led government fears a long ceasefire will lock in Serb territorial gains.

"We can work on the ceasefire and we'll have to await the final results of the 'contact group' in territorial recommendations," Mr. Clinton

said. The contact group refers to U.S., European, and Russian diplomats trying to mediate between warring Muslims and Serbs.

On Korea, Mr. Balladur deferred to Mr. Clinton, saying he agreed it was "extremely important" to support non-proliferation of dangerous weapons. "I assured the president of our support for a Security Council resolution," he added.

Tensions with North Korea also were on the agenda.

On the war in Bosnia, the French have taken the lead in "trying to push for a settlement. Paris provided about one-fourth of the United Nations peacekeeping force of 27,000 soldiers and has threatened to pull out all of their peacekeepers by winter if a peace plan does not materialise."

Mr. Clinton played down suggestions that he is being pressured by French leaders to push the Muslim-led government for a settlement with Bosnian Serbs.

"I wouldn't characterise it that way," Mr. Clinton said. "All of us want to try to bring an end to the fighting and have a settlement which can lead to a comprehensive resolution."

Tehran protests arrests in Thailand

TEHRAN (Agencies) — Iran has protested the arrest of "several" of its nationals in Thailand for their alleged role in an attempt to car-bomb the Israeli embassy in Bangkok, Tehran Radio said Tuesday.

The Thai ambassador in Tehran was summoned to the Foreign Ministry late Monday to receive the official protest, it was said.

The ministry called for "immediate proof" of charges against the Iranians, and urged Thailand to allow Iranian diplomats in Bangkok to visit those in custody.

Thai police said they had arrested on Friday one of two Iranians suspected of a role in the car-bomb plot against the Israeli embassy in March.

Hossein Shahriari, 25, was seized a day after he entered the southern town of Hat Yai from Malaysia and the police said he would be charged with processing illegal explosive substances.

Authorities in Thailand launched a hunt for the two men after they uncovered a gigantic homemade bomb in a truck that had been involved in an accident near the Israeli embassy on March 11.

Paper assails Israel

A state-run Iranian newspaper Monday condemned Israel's deadly air raid on South Lebanon last week and accused the Jewish state of trying to "gobble up" the Middle East with the help of Western countries.

The English-language daily Tehran Times, in an editorial, said Israeli aggressions followed a pattern dictated by how the international community responded to its actions.

The paper referred to Israel's May 21 kidnapping of Mustafa Dirani, leader of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah guerrillas in South Lebanon.

When this "flagrant instance" of violation of international laws met no protest from the West, Israel understood this as a "green light for further crimes," the newspaper said.

In Beirut, a visiting Iranian Foreign Ministry official reiterated Monday that his government knew nothing about the fate of an Israeli airman missing since his plane was shot down over Lebanon eight years ago.

"Iranian officials have declared several times in the past that the Islamic Republic of Iran knows nothing about the fate of this airman. This is still the case," said Mohammad Kazem Khansari, an Iranian deputy foreign minister.

U.N. team satisfied with Iraq mission

BAGHDAD (R) — A team of U.N. germ warfare experts left Iraq on Tuesday, saying their mission to track down and tag biological equipment that can be used for both peaceful and military purposes had gone smoothly.

"We were able to complete the mission. Everything went on smoothly," team leader Dave Franz told Reuters before leaving Baghdad after a nine-day visit that took them to 25 cities in and around the Iraqi capital and in the northern city of Mosul.

The 10-member mission, the fifth biological team to visit Iraq since the 1991 Gulf war, was part of U.N. efforts to ensure that Iraq does not renege weapons of mass destruction scrapped under the terms of the ceasefire that halted the conflict.

Mr. Franz and his team tagged dual-use equipment as part of a long-term monitoring scheme. Agreement on such monitoring is one of the conditions for easing the U.N. trade blockade imposed on Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Mr. Franz said that the tagging operation was not yet complete and further teams would visit Iraq to finish the job.

Iraq renews call for talks with Kuwait

AMMAN (AP) — An Iraqi official was quoted Tuesday as saying Baghdad wanted to open talks with Kuwait, which it occupied in 1990 sparking the Gulf war, and was ready to discuss recognition of the emirate as a sovereign state.

Since U.S.-led allies forces expelled Iraq from its neighbour in March 1991, Iraq has refused to acknowledge Kuwait's independence or acknowledge new borders drawn by the United Nations.

But in an interview with the Jordanian daily, Al Dostour, Saadi Mehdi, a member of the Iraqi National Council, Iraq's central legislative body, said Baghdad's position had shifted.

Mr. Mehdi, interviewed in Baghdad, said Iraq wanted to open talks, settle differences and restore relations and was "ready to discuss the recognition of Kuwait as an independent state and to agree on the new demarcation lines of its borders."

"We call upon the other party, Kuwait, to come to Baghdad and discuss all problems between us to achieve an acceptable solution for both sides... and to strengthen Arab solidarity," Mr. Mehdi told the newspaper.

Iraq has claimed Kuwait is an Iraqi governorate and refused to recognise the U.N. Security Council resolution

that demarcated disputed border areas. Baghdad called the resolution "unfair."

In other comments to Al Dostour, Mr. Mehdi denied southern Yemeni accusations made Sunday that Iraq was supporting North Yemen in its war with secessionist southerners which erupted May 4.

"This is untrue, these are only rumours," said Mr. Mehdi. "We are solidly against fighting among brethren but we also are in support of the constitutional legitimacy and the unity of Yemen."

Haidar Abu Baker Al Attas, the prime minister of South Yemen's secessionist government, said in Cairo that both Jordan and Iraq were covertly supplying North Yemen's armed forces with "military spare parts." Jordan also denied the charge.

Mr. Mehdi also said that Iraq's relations with neighbour states Iran and Turkey are on the mend.

"We are in continuous dialogue with them to restore our relations to their natural state, and we hope that these relations will be restored as soon as possible," Mr. Mehdi said.

Turkey did not take any armed action against Iraq during the Gulf war. However, it did cut off all diplomatic ties with Iraq and opened its airbases to allied fighter planes bombing Iraq.

Hebron observers pull back from front

HEBRON (AFP) — International observers deployed to boost security for Palestinians have decided to step back from the frontline of violence in this mosque massacre town, a spokesman said Tuesday.

"When there is a clash going on we want to be a little less on the frontline than we have been," said Bjarno Sorensen, spokesman for the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH).

"It has nothing to do with our security. We don't want anyone to use us as a kind of shield, neither the Israeli Defence Forces nor the Palestinians," Mr. Sorensen said. "What could easily be done if we are too close to the clashes."

Trouble erupted again Tuesday in the occupied city where a Jewish settler slaughtered more than 30 Muslims on Feb. 25 leading to the deployment of the observers in a bid to increase security for Palestinians.

Palestinian sources said soldiers arrested 40 youths after stones were thrown.

Mr. Sorensen said none of the 116 observers from Norway, Italy and Denmark had been hurt since they were deployed on May 8. However, most had more than a whiff of teargas.

Some have taken to wearing gasmasks during the almost daily confrontations between soldiers and Palestinian activists.

"When it comes to trying to get the parties together we will be more on the frontline," he said.

The TIPH's three-month mandate allows for no police role, only monitoring of events and reporting back. The army put the observers under curfew for a couple of days along with the rest of the population last month after a series of shootings.

Donor countries would meet later this month to review the operation and decide whether or not to review the mandate, Mr. Sorensen said.

In other developments:

Algeria rounds up 75 suspects

TUNIS (R) — Algerian security forces said on Monday they had arrested 75 suspected members of an underground armed fundamentalist group, the Armed Islamic Movement (MIA).

The 75 men are suspected of having shot dead 27 members of the security forces in various attacks carried out since March 1993 in Algiers and surrounding towns, the official Algerian news agency APS said.

The agency was reporting an official security statement. APS, monitored in Tunis, said some of those arrested had smuggled arms from abroad with the help of two unnamed foreign nationals.

Others had been told by MIA leader said Mekhloufi, a former army officer, to carry out robberies and use the money to buy "safe" houses where MIA members could hide, APS said.

Muslim militants took to arms after the Algerian army in 1992 cancelled a general election in which the Islamists had taken a commanding lead. More than 3,600 people, mostly Muslim militants and members of the security forces, have been killed in nearly 2-1/2 years of civil strife.

A special court on Monday jailed two militants for five and three years respectively on charges of attempting to undermine the security of the state and bearing illegal arms, APS said.

The agency said Lakhdar Naimi and Behimer were members of a cell set up to spy for armed militants.

The special court of Algiers jailed one militant for life and five others to prison terms of between 10 and 20 years on charges of belonging to an armed group and attempted murder, APS said.

The government upped the special courts in 1992 to fight Islamists. More than 480 militant Muslims have been sentenced to death by ordinary, special and military courts since early 1992.

COLUMN

Indian minister sacked for mid-air flirting

BOMBAY (R) — The chief minister of India's Haryana state sacked a member of his cabinet saying the minister had misbehaved with an air hostess on a flight from the tourist resort of Goa. Indian newspaper reported. The Asian Age quoted Chief Minister Bhajan Lal as saying Technical Education Minister Chhattarpal Singh had been dismissed Monday after the incident was confirmed by two senior members of their Congress Party, travelling on the same flight on May 30. No details were given of what the minister was alleged to have done on the Goa to New Delhi flight beyond saying he had made advances on the air hostess. Mr. Singh, denying the charges, said the issue was cooked up to force him out of the cabinet because of differences with the chief minister. "If any woman, that too an air hostess... can couch that I have behaved in an indecent manner ever, I will quit the assembly as well as public life," he said in a statement.

More scuffling in Taiwan's 'lovable-zoo'

TAIPEI (R) — A scuffle broke out again in Taiwan's National Assembly, dubbed a "lovable zoo" by the opposition, after a ruling party legislator slapped an opposition deputy Monday. Lee Pi-Hai, an assembly woman in the ruling Nationalist Party, slapped Wang Hsueh-Feng of the main opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), who screamed and began grappling with Ms. Lee. The women were quickly separated and Ms. Wang suffered scratches on her face and threatened to sue Ms. Lee. Monday's session was tense because the secretariat had barred news photographers from entering the chambers to cover the meeting. DPP assembly whip Tsi Ming-Hsien demanded an explanation why photographers were excluded from what he called a "lovable zoo".

Alan Jackson named Entertainer of the Year

NASHVILLE, Tenn (R) — Lanky country and western singer Alan Jackson swept the 28th annual TNN Music City News Awards show with five wins, including the top Entertainer of the Year Prize. The show, hosted by Waylon Jennings, Michelle Wright and Billy Dean, was telecast over the Nashville Network (TNN) from Nashville's legendary Grand Ole Opry House. Jackson won the Album of the Year Award for his best-selling A Lot About Livin' collection and also won both the Single of the Year and Video of the Year Awards for his song Chatahoochie. Jackson also won the award for Male Artist of the Year. His fifth win as Entertainer of the Year climaxed the event, which kicks off Nashville's traditional weeklong fair celebration. Lorrie Morgan, who recently recorded duets with Frank Sinatra for an upcoming album, won the Female Artist of the Year Award. Brooks and Dunn won best vocal duo, while the veteran Statler Bros took their 24th award as vocal group.

World's poor rise by 70,000 a day — report

LONDON (R) — The number of people in the world living in absolute poverty is rising by 70,000 a day, the British charity Actionaid said Wednesday. It warned in a report that by the year 2000, 700 million people will still be without safe water and 100 million children will not be going to primary schools. "Unless concerted action is taken now to help people out of the poverty trap and into a sustainable lifestyle, the numbers in absolute poverty will reach 1.5 billion by the year 2000," Actionaid Director Martin Griffiths said. The charity said targets for access to safe water, basic education and health care, which were set at a world summit for children in 1990, will not be met. The report, entitled "rooting out poverty", was compiled from official statistics and Actionaid's field work in 20 of the world's poorest countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

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